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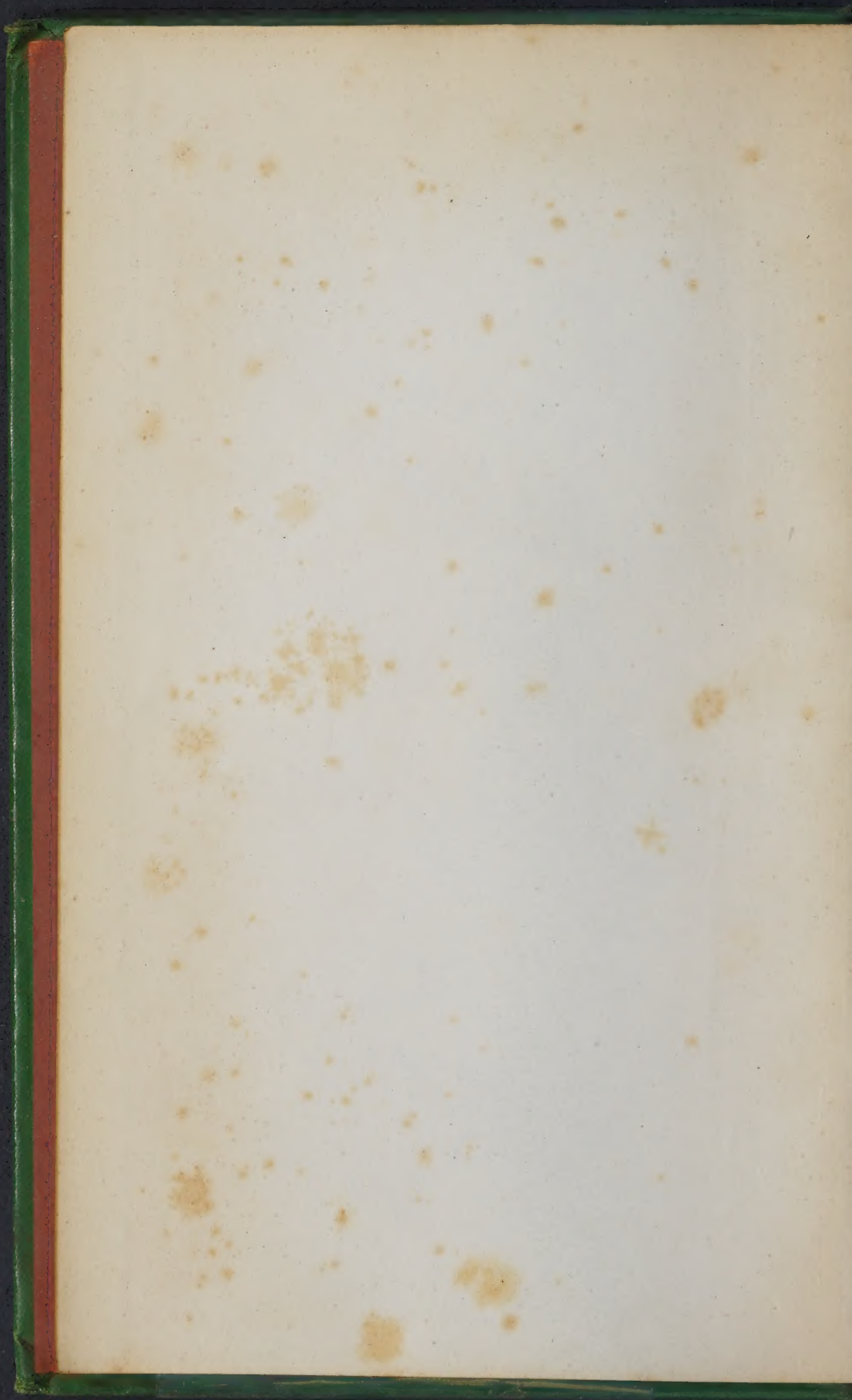












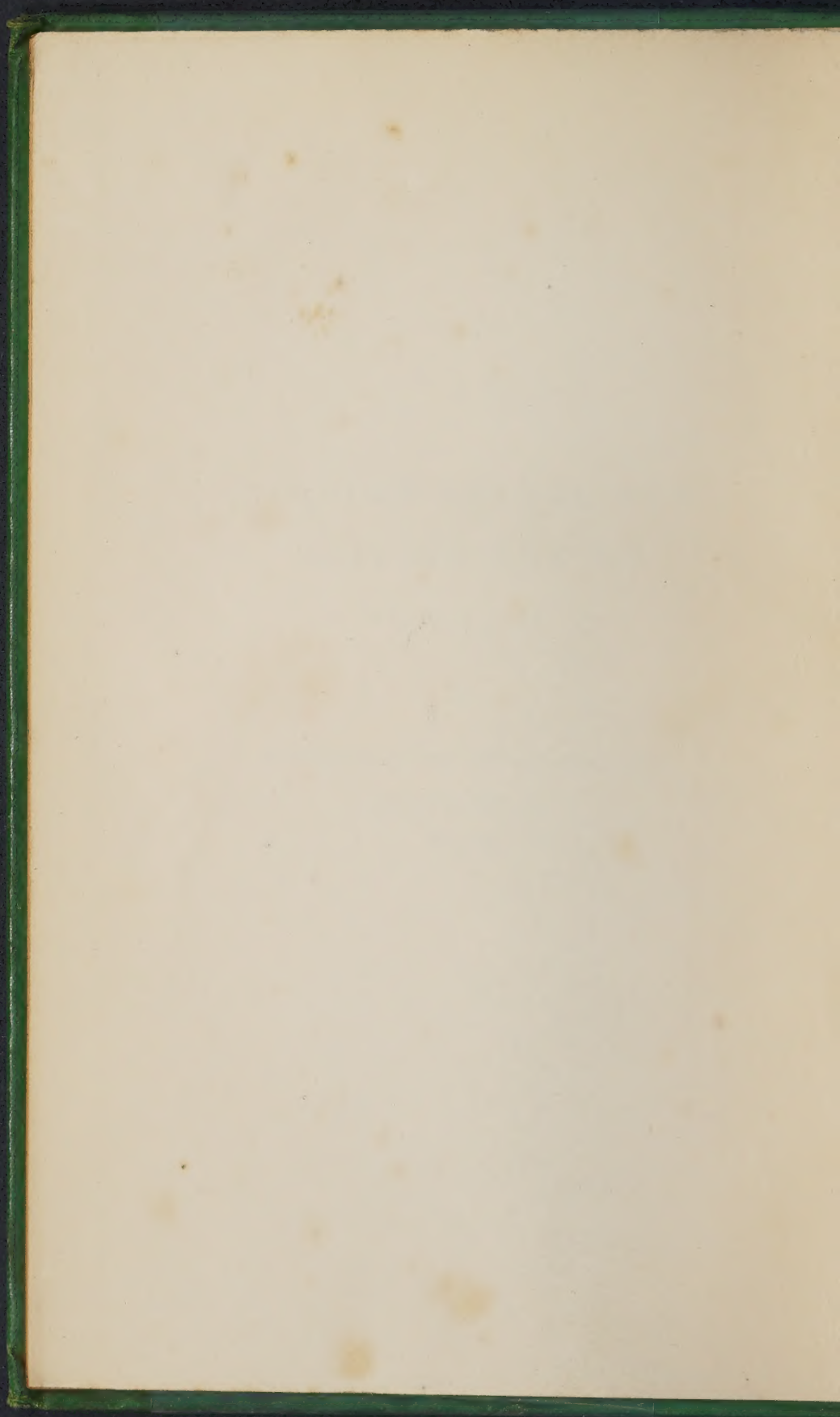
THE ALDINE EDITION
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THE POETICAL WORKS OF EDMUND SPENSER

IN FIVE VOLUMES

VOL III



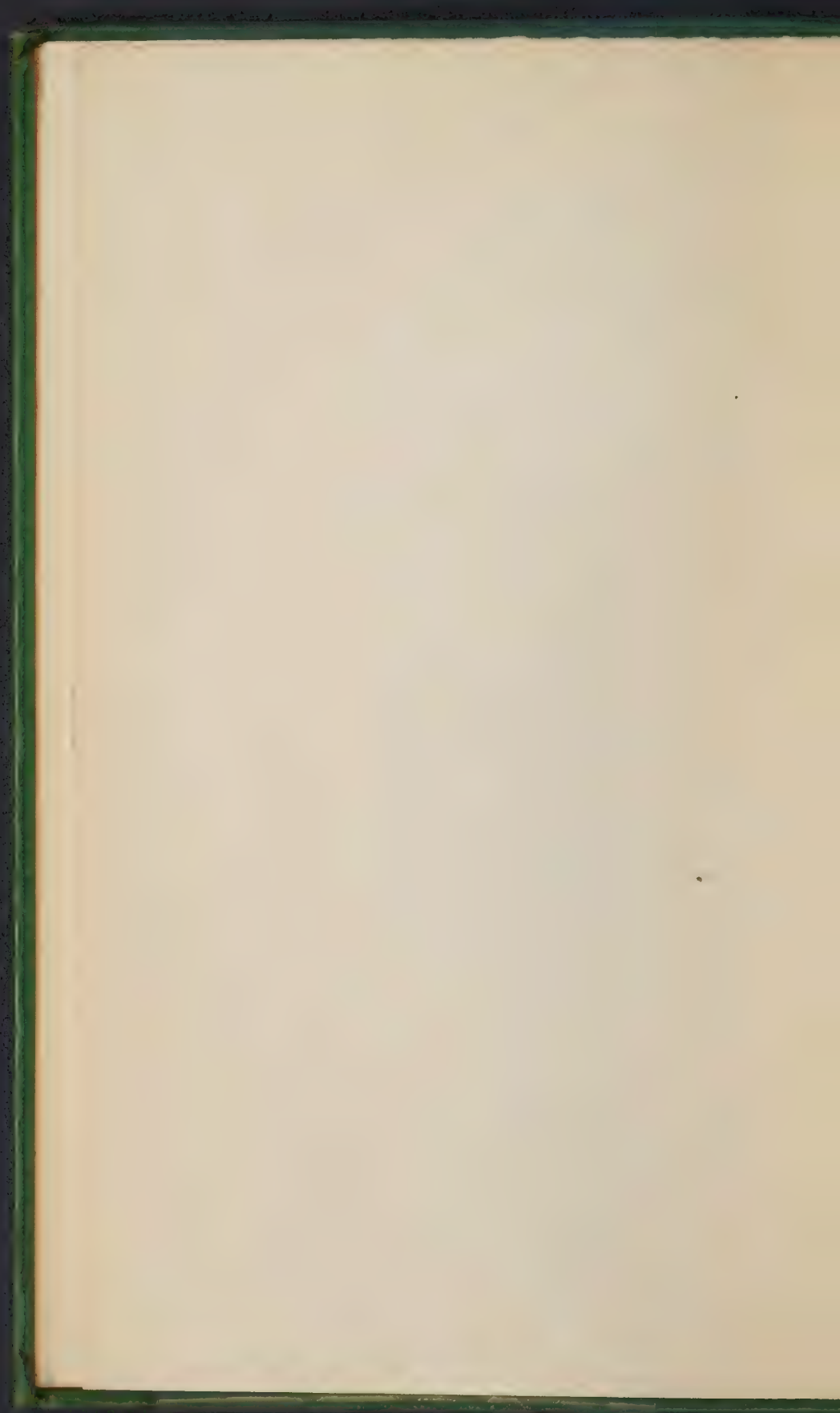
THE POETICAL WORKS OF
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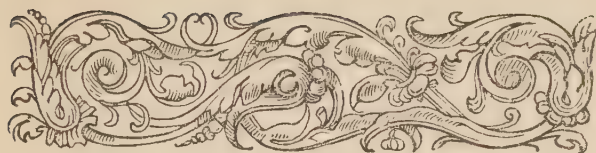
VOLUME III



LONDON
BELL AND DALDY FLEET STREET

1866





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THE THIRDE BOOKE OF
THE FAERIE QUEENE

CONTAYNING THE LEGEND OF BRITOMARTIS,
OR OF CHASTITY.

CANTO VI.

*The birth of fayre Belphebe and
Of Amorett is told :
The Gardins of Adonis fraught
With pleasures manifold.*

WELL may I weene, faire Ladies, all this while
Ye wonder how this noble Damozell
So great perfections did in her compile,
Sith that in salvage forests she did dwell,
So farre from court and royall Citadell,
The great schoolmaistresse of all courtesy :
Seemeth that such wilde woodes should far expell
All civile usage and gentility,
And gentle sprite deforme with rude rusticity.

But to this faire Belphebe in her berth 2
The hevens so favorable were and free,
Looking with myld aspect upon the earth
In th' Horoscope of her nativitee,
That all the gifts of grace and chastitee
On her they poured forth of plenteous horne :
Jove laught on Venus from his soverayne see,
And Phœbus with faire beames did her adorne,
And all the Graces rockt her cradle being borne

Her berth was of the wombe of Morning dew, 3
 And her conception of the joyous Prime ;
 And all her whole creation did her shew
 Pure and unspotted from all loathly crime
 That is ingenerate in fleshly slime.
 So was this virgin borne, so was she bred ;
 So was she trayned up from time to time
 In all chaste vertue and true bounti-hed,
 Till to her dew perfection she were ripened.

Her mother was the faire Chrysogonee, 4
 The daughter of Amphisa, who by race
 A Faerie was, yborne of high degree.
 She bore Belphœbe ; she bore in like cace
 Fayre Amoretta in the second place : [share
 These two were twinnes, and twixt them two did
 The heritage of all celestiaall grace ;
 That all the rest it seemd they robbed bare
 Of bounty, and of beautie, and all vertues rare.

It were a goodly storie to declare 5
 By what straunge accident faire Chrysogone
 Conceiv'd these infants, and how them she bare
 In this wilde forrest wandring all alone,
 After she had nine moneths fulfild and gone :
 For not as other wemens commune brood
 They were enwombed in the sacred throne
 Of her chaste bodie ; nor with commune food,
 As other wemens babes, they sucked vitall blood :

But wondrously they were begot and bred 6
 Through influence of th' hevens fruitfull ray,
 As it in antique bookes is mentioned.
 It was upon a Sommers shinie day,
 When Titan faire his beames did display,
 In a fresh fountaine, far from all mens vew,
 She bath'd her brest the boyling heat t'allay ;
 She bath'd with roses red and violets blew,
 And all the sweetest flowers that in the forrest grew :

Till faint through yrkesome wearines, adowne 7
Upon the grassy ground her selfe she layd
To sleepe, the whiles a gentle slombring swowne
Upon her fell, all naked bare displayd.
The sunbeames bright upon her body playd,
Being through former bathing mollifide,
And pierst into her wombe ; where they embayd
With so sweet sence and secret powre unspide,
That in her pregnant flesh they shortly fructifide.

Miraculous may seeme to him that reades 8
So straunge ensample of conception ;
But reason teacheth that the fruitfull seades
Of all things living, through impression
Of the sunbeames in moyst complexion,
Doe life conceive and quickned are by kynd :
So, after Nilus inundation,
Infinite shapes of creatures men doe fynd
Informed in the mud on which the Sunne hath shynd.

Great father he of generation 9
Is rightly cald, th' authour of life and light ;
And his faire sister for creation
Ministreth matter fit, which, tempred right
With heate and humour, breedes the living wight.
So sprong these twinnes in womb of Chrysogone ;
Yet wist she nought thereof, but sore affright,
Wondred to see her belly so upblone,
Which still increast till she her terme had full outgone.

Whereof conceiving shame and foule disgrace, 10
Albe her guiltlesse conscience her cleard,
She fled into the wilderness a space,
Till that unweeldy burden she had reard,
And shund dishonor which as death she feared :
Where, wearie of long traveill, downe to rest
Her selfe she set, and comfortably cheard :
There a sad cloud of sleepe her overkest,
And seized every sence with sorrow sore opprest.

It fortun'd, faire Venus having lost 11
 Her little sonne, the winged god of love,
 Who, for some light displeasure which him crost,
 Was from her fled as flit as ayery Dove,
 And left her blisfull bowre of joy above :
 (So from her often he had fled away,
 When she for ought him sharpely did reprove,
 And wandred in the world in straunge aray,
 Disguiz'd in thousand shapes, that none might him
 bewray.)

Him for to seeke, she left her heavenly hous, 12
 The house of goodly formes and faire aspects,
 Whence all the world derives the glorious
 Features of beautie, and all shapes select,
 With which high God his workmanship hath deckt ;
 And searched everie way through which his wings
 Had borne him, or his tract she mote detect :
 She promist kisses sweet, and sweeter things,
 Unto the man that of him tydings to her brings

First she him sought in Court, where most he us'd 13
 Whylome to haunt, but there she found him not ;
 But many there she found which sore accus'd
 His falshood, and with fowle infamous blot
 His cruell deedes and wicked wyles did spot :
 Ladies and Lordes she every where mote heare
 Complayning, how with his empoysned shot
 Their wofull harts he wounded had whyleare,
 Andso had left them languishing twixt hope and feare.

She then the Cities sought from gate to gate, 14
 And everie one did aske, did he him see ?
 And everie one her answerd, that too late
 He had him seene, and felt the crueltee
 Of his sharpe dartes and whot artilleree :
 And every one threw forth reproches rife
 Of his mischievous deedes, and sayd, That hee
 Was the disturber of all civill life,
 The enmy of peace, and authour of all strife.

Then in the countrey she abroad him sought, 15
And in the rurall cottages inquir'd;
Where also many plaintes to her were brought,
How he their heedelesse harts with love had fir'd,
And his false venim through their veines inspir'd:
And eke the gentle Shepheard swaynes, which sat
Keeping their fleecy flockes as they were hyr'd,
She sweetly heard complaine, both how and what
Her sonne had to them doen; yet she did smile thereat.

But when in none of all these she him got, 16
She gan avize where els he mote him hyde:
At last she her bethought that she had not
Yet sought the salvage woods and forests wyde,
In which full many lovely Nymphes abyde;
Mongst whom might be that he did closely lye,
Or that the love of some of them him tyde:
For thy she thether cast her course t' apply,
To search the secret haunts of Dianes company.

Shortly unto the wastefull woods she came, 17
Whereas she found the Goddesses with her crew,
After late chace of their embrewed game,
Sitting beside a fountaine in a rew;
Some of them washing with the liquid dew
From of their dainty limbs the dusty sweat
And soyle, which did deforme their lively hew;
Others lay shaded from the scorching heat;
The rest upon her person gave attendance great.

She, having hong upon a bough on high 18
Her bow and painted quiver, had unlaste
Her silver buskins from her nimble thigh,
And her lanck loynes ungirt, and brests unbraste,
After her heat the breathing cold to taste:
Her golden lockes, that late in tresses bright
Embreaded were for hindring of her haste,
Now loose about her shoulders hong undight,
And were with sweet Ambrosia all besprinckled light.

Soone as she Venus saw behinde her backe, 19
 She was asham'd to be so loose surpriz'd;
 And woxe halfe wroth against her damzels slacke,
 That had not her thereof before aviz'd,
 But suffred her so carelesly disguiz'd
 Be overtaken. Soone her garments loose
 Upgath'ring, in her bosome she compriz'd
 Well as she might, and to the Goddesse rose;
 Whiles all her Nymphes did like a girlond her enclose.

Goodly she gan faire Cytherea greet, 20
 And shortly asked her, what cause her brought
 Into that wilderness for her unmeet, [fraught?
 From her sweete bowres, and beds with pleasures
 That suddein chaung she straung adventure thought.
 To whom halfe weeping she thus answered;
 That she her dearest sonne Cupido sought,
 Who in his frowardnes from her was fled,
 That she repented sore to have him angered.

Thereat Diana gan to smile, in scorne 21
 Of her vaine playnt, and to her scoffing sayd:
 "Great pittie sure that ye be so forlorne
 Of your gay sonne, that gives ye so good ayd
 To your disports: ill mote ye bene apayd."
 But she was more engrieved, and replide;
 "Faire sister, ill beseemes it to upbrayd
 A dolefull heart with so disdainfull pride:
 The like that mine may be your paine another tide.

"As you in woods and wanton wilderness 22
 Your glory sett to chace the salvage beasts,
 So my delight is all in joyfulness,
 In beds, in bowres, in banckets, and in feasts:
 And ill becomes you, with your lofty creasts,
 To scorne the joy that Jove is glad to seeke:
 We both are bownd to follow heavens beheasts,
 And tend our charges with obeisance meeke.
 Spare, gentle sister, with reproch my paine to eeke;

" And tell me, if that ye my sonne have heard 23
To lurke emongst your Nymphes in secret wize,
Or keepe their cabins? much I am affeard
Least he like one of them him selfe disguise,
And turne his arrowes to their exercize.
So may he long him selfe full easie hide;
For he is faire and fresh in face and guize
As any Nimphe; (let not it be envide.)"
So saying, every Nymph full narrowly she eide.

But Phœbe therewith sore was angered, 24
And sharply saide: " Goe, Dame; goe, seeke your
Where you him lately lefte, in Mars his bed: [boy,
He comes not here; we scorne his foolish joy,
Ne lend we leisure to his idle toy:
But if I catch him in this company,
By Stygian lake I vow, whose sad annoy
The Gods doe dread, he dearly shall abyē:
He clip his wanton wings, that he no more shall flye."

Whom whenas Venus saw so sore displeasd, 25
Shee inly sory was, and gan relent
What shee had said: so her shee soone appeasd
With sugred words and gentle blandishment,
From which a fountaine from her sweete lips went.
And welled goodly forth, that in short space
She was well pleasd, and forth her damzells sent
Through all the woods, to search from place to place,
If any tract of him or tidings they mote trace.

To search the God of love her Nymphes she sent 26
Throughout the wandring forest every where:
And after them her selfe eke with her went
To seeke the fugitive both farre and nere.
So long they sought, till they arrived were
In that same shady covert whereas lay
Faيرة Crysgone in slombry traunce whilere;
Who in her sleepe (a wondrous thing to say)
Unwares had borne two babes, as faire as springing day.

Unwares she them conceivd, unwares she bore : 27
 She bore withouten paine, that she conceiv'd
 Withouten pleasure ; ne her need implore
 Lucinaes aide : which when they both perceiv'd,
 They were through wonder nigh of sence berev'd,
 And gazing each on other nought bespake.
 At last they both agreed her, seeming griev'd,
 Out of her heavie swowne not to awake
 But from her loving side the tender babes to take.

Up they them tooke ; each one a babe uptooke, 28
 And with them carried to be fostered.
 Dame Phœbe to a Nymphe her babe betooke
 To be upbrought in perfect Maydenhed,
 And, of her selfe, her name Belphebe red :
 But Venus hers thence far away convayd,
 To be upbrought in goodly womanhed ;
 And, in her litle loves stead, which was strayd,
 Her Amoretta cald, to comfort her dismayd.

Shee brought her to her joyous Paradize, 29
 Wher most she wonnes when she on earth does dwell ;
 So faire a place as Nature can devize :
 Whether in Paphos, or Cytheron hill,
 Or it in Gnidus bee, I wote not well ;
 But well I wote by triall, that this same
 All other pleasaunt places doth excell,
 And called is by her lost lovers name,
 The Gardin of Adonis, far renownd by fame.

In that same Gardin all the goodly flowres, 30
 Wherewith dame Nature doth her beautify,
 And decks the girlonds of her Paramoures,
 Are fetcht : there is the first seminary
 Of all things that are borne to live and dye,
 According to their kynds. Long worke it were
 Here to account the endlesse progeny
 Of all the weeds that bud and blossome there ;
 But so much as doth need must needs be counted here.

It sited was in fruitfull soyle of old, 31
And girt in with two walls on either side ;
The one of yron, the other of bright gold,
That none might thorough breake, nor overstride :
And double gates it had which opened wide,
By which both in and out men moten pas ;
Th' one faire and fresh, the other old and dride.
Old Genius the porter of them was,
Old Genius, the which a double nature has.

He letteth in, he letteth out to wend 32
All that to come into the world desire.
A thousand thousand naked babes attend
About him day and night, which doe require
That he with fleshly weeds would them attire :
Such as him list, such as eternall fate
Ordained hath, he clothes with sinfull mire,
And sendeth forth to live in mortall state,
Till they agayn returne backe by the hinder gate.

After that they againe retourned beene, 33
They in that Gardin planted bee agayne,
And grow afresh, as they had never seene
Fleshly corruption, nor mortall payne.
Some thousand yeares so doen they there remayne,
And then of him are clad with other hew,
Or sent into the chaungefull world agayne,
Till thether they retourne where first they grew :
So, like a wheele, arownd they ronne from old to new.

Ne needs there Gardiner to sett or sow, 34
To plant or prune ; for of their owne accord
All things, as they created were, doe grow,
And yet remember well the mighty word
Which first was spoken by th' Almighty Lord,
That bad them to increase and multiply :
Ne doe they need with water of the ford,
Or of the clouds, to moysten their roots dry ;
For in themselves eternall moisture they imply.

Infinite shapes of creatures there are bred, 35
And uncouth formes, which none yet ever knew :
And every sort is in a sondry bed
Sett by it selfe, and ranckt in comely rew ;
Some fitt for reasonable sowles t' indew ;
Some made for beasts, some made for birds to weare ;
And all the fruitfull spawnne of fishes hew
In endlesse rancks along enraunged were,
That seemd the Ocean could not containe them there.

Daily they grow, and daily forth are sent 36
Into the world, it to replenish more ;
Yet is the stocke not lessened nor spent,
But still remaines in everlasting store,
As it at first created was of yore :
For in the wide wombe of the world there lyes,
In hatefull darknes and in deepe horrore,
An huge eternall Chaos, which supplies
The substaunces of natures fruitfull progenyes.

All things from thence doe their first being fetch, 37
And borrow matter whereof they are made ;
Which, whenas forme and feature it does ketch,
Becomes a body, and doth then invade
The state of life out of the griesly shade.
That substaunce is eterne, and bideth so ;
Ne when the life decayes and forme does fade,
Doth it consume and into nothing goe,
But chaunged is, and often altred to and free.

The substaunce is not chaungd nor altered, 38
But th' only forme and outward fashion ;
For every substaunce is conditioned
To chaunge her hew, and sondry formes to don,
Meet for her temper and complexion :
For formes are variable, and decay
By course of kinde and by occasion ;
And that faire flowre of beautie fades away,
As doth the lilly fresh before the sunny ray.

Great enemy to it, and all the rest 39
That in the Gardin of Adonis springs,
Is wicked Tyme; who with his scyth addrest
Does mow the flowring herbes and goodly things,
And all their glory to the ground downe flings,
Where they do wither, and are fowly mard:
He flyes about, and with his flaggy winges
Beates downe both leaves and buds without regard,
Ne ever pitty may relent his malice hard.

Yet pitty often did the gods relent, 40
To see so faire thinges mard and spoiled quight;
And their great mother Venus did lament
The losse of her deare brood, her deare delight:
Her hart was pierst with pitty at the sight,
When walking through the Gardin them she saw,
Yet no'te she find redresse for such despight:
For all that lives is subject to that law;
All things decay in time, and to their end doe draw.

But were it not that Time their troubler is, 41
All that in this delightfull Gardin growes
Should happy bee, and have immortall blis:
For here all plenty and all pleasure flowes;
And sweete love gentle fitts emongst them throwes,
Without fell rancor or fond gealosity.
Franckly each Paramor his leman knowes,
Each bird his mate; ne any does envy
Their goodly meriment and gay felicity.

There is continuall Spring, and harvest there 42
Continuall, both meeting at one tyme;
For both the boughes doe laughing blossoms beare,
And with fresh colours decke the wanton Pryme,
And eke attonce the heavenly trees they clyme,
Which seeme to labour under their fruites lode:
The whiles the joyous birdes make their pastyme
Emongst the shady leaves, their sweet abode,
And their trew loves without suspition tell abode.

Right in the midst of that Paradise 43
There stood a stately Mount, on whose round top
A gloomy grove of mirtle trees did rise,
Whose shady boughes sharp steele did never lop,
Nor wicked beastes their tender buds did crop,
But like a girlond compassed the hight;
And from their fruitfull sydes sweet gum did drop,
That all the ground, with pretious deaw bedight,
Threw forth most dainty odours and most sweet delight.

And in the thickest covert of that shade 44
There was a pleasaunt Arber, not by art
But of the trees owne inclination made,
Which knitting their rancke braunches, part to part,
With wanton yvie twine entrayld athwart,
And Eglantine and Caprifole emong,
Fashiond above within their inmost part, [throng,
That nether Phœbus beams could through them
Nor Aeolus sharp blast could worke them any wrong.

And all about grew every sort of flowre, 45
To which sad lovers were transformde of yore;
Fresh Hyacinthus, Phœbus paramoure
And dearest love;
Foolish Narcisse, that likes the watry shore;
Sad Amaranthus, made a flowre but late,
Sad Amaranthus, in whose purple gore
Me seemes I see Amintas wretched fate,
To whom sweet Poets verse hath given endlesse date.

There wont fayre Venus often to enjoy 46
Her deare Adonis joyous company,
And reape sweet pleasure of the wanton boy:
There yet, some say, in secret he does ly,
Lapped in flowres and pretious spycery,
By her hid from the world, and from the skill
Of Stygian Gods, which doe her love envy;
But she her selfe, when ever that she will,
Possesseth him, and of his sweetnesse takes her fill.

And sooth, it seemes, they say ; for he may not 47
For ever dye, and ever buried bee
In balefull night where all thinges are forgot :
All be he subject to mortalitie,
Yet is eterne in mutabilitie,
And by succession made perpetuall,
Transformed oft, and chaunged diverslie ;
For him the Father of all formes they call :
Therefore needs mote he live, that living gives to all.

There now he liveth in eternall blis, 48
Joying his goddesse, and of her enjoyd ;
Ne feareth he henceforth that foe of his,
Which with his cruell tuske him deadly cloyd :
For that wilde Bore, the which him once annoyd,
She firmly hath emprisoned for ay,
That her sweet love his malice mote avoyd,
In a strong rocky Cave, which is, they say, [may.
Hewen underneath that Mount, that none him losen

There now he lives in everlasting joy, 49
With many of the Gods in company
Which thether haunt, and with the winged boy,
Sporting him selfe in safe felicity :
Who when he hath with spoiles and cruelty
Ransackt the world, and in the wofull harts
Of many wretches set his triumphes hye,
Thether resortes, and, laying his sad dartes
Asyde, with faire Adonis playes his wanton partes.

And his trew love faire Psyche with him playes, 50
Fayre Psyche to him lately reconcyld,
After long troubles and unmeet upbrayes,
With which his mother Venus her revyld,
And eke himselfe her cruelly exyld :
But now in stedfast love and happy state
She with him lives, and hath him borne a chyld,
Pleasure, that doth both gods and men aggrate,
Pleasure, the daughter of Cupid and Psyche late.

Hether great Venus brought this infant fayre, 51
The yonger daughter of Chrysogonee,
And unto Psyche with great trust and care
Committed her, yfostered to bee
And trained up in trew feminitee :
Who no lesse carefully her tendered
Then her owne daughter Pleasure, to whom shee
Made her companion, and her lessoned
In all the lore of love, and goodly womanhead.

In which when she to perfect ripenes grew, 52
Of grace and beautie noble Paragone,
She brought her forth into the worldes vew,
To be th' ensample of true love alone,
And Lodestarre of all chaste affection
To all fayre Ladies that doe live on grownd.
To Faery court she came ; where many one
Admyrd her goodly haveour, and fownd
His feeble hart wide launched with loves cruel wownd.

But she to none of them her love did cast, 53
Save to the noble knight Sir Scudamore,
To whom her loving hart she linked fast
In faithfull love, t' abide for evermore ;
And for his dearest sake endured sore
Sore trouble of an hainous enemy,
Who her would forced have to have forlore
Her former love and stedfast loialty,
As ye may elsewhere reade that ruefull history.

But well I weene, ye first desire to learne 54
What end unto that fearefull Damozell,
Which fledd so fast from that same foster stearne
Whom with his brethren Timias slew, befell :
That was, to weet, the goodly Florimell ;
Who wandring for to seeke her lover deare,
Her lover deare, her dearest Marinell,
Into misfortune fell, as ye did heare,
And from Prince Arthure fled with wings of idle feare.

CANTO VII.

*The witches sonne loves Florimell :
 She flies ; he faines to dy.
 Satyrane saves the Squyre of Dames
 From Gyaunts tyranny.*

LIKE as an Hynd forth singled from the
 heard, 1

That hath escaped from a ravenous beast,
 Yet flies away of her owne feete afeard,
 And every leafe, that shaketh with the least
 Murmure of winde, her terror hath encreast ;
 So fledd fayre Florimell from her vaine feare,
 Long after she from perill was releast :
 Each shade she saw, and each noyse she did heare,
 Did seeme to be the same which she escapt whileare.

All that same evening she in flying spent, 2
 And all that night her course continewd ;
 Ne did she let dull sleepe once to relent,
 Nor wearinesse to slack her hast, but fled
 Ever alike, as if her former dred
 Were hard behind, her ready to arrest ;
 And her white Palfrey, having conquered
 The maistring raines out of her weary wrest,
 Perforce her carried where ever he thought best.

So long as breath and hable puissance 3
 Did native corage unto him supply,
 His pace he freshly forward did advaunce,
 And carried her beyond all jeopardy ;
 But nought that wanteth rest can long aby :
 He, having through incessant traveill spent
 His force, at last perforce adowne did ly,
 Ne foot could further move. The Lady gent
 Thereat was suddein strook wit great astonishment ;

And, forst t' alight, on foot mote algates fare 4
 A traveller unwonted to such way :
 Need teacheth her this lesson hard and rare,
 That fortune all in equall launce doth sway,
 And mortall miseries doth make her play.
 So long she traveild, till at length she came
 To an hilles side, which did to her bewray
 A litle valley subject to the same,
 All coverd with thick woodes that quite it overcame.

Through the tops of the high trees she did descry 5
 A litle smoke, whose vapour thin and light
 Reeking aloft uprolled to the sky :
 Which chearefull signe did send unto her sight
 That in the same did wonne some living wight.
 Eftsoones her steps she thereunto applyd,
 And came at last in weary wretched plight
 Unto the place, to which her hope did guyde,
 To finde some refuge there, and rest her wearie syde.

There in a gloomy hollow glen she found 6
 A little cottage, built of stickes and reedes
 In homely wize, and wald with sods around ;
 In which a witch did dwell, in loathly weedes
 And wilfull want, all carelesse of her needes ;
 So choosing solitarie to abide
 Far from all neighbours, that her divelish deedes
 And hellish arts from people she might hide,
 And hurt far off unknowne whom ever she envide.

The Damzell there arriving entred in ; 7
 Where sitting on the flore the Hag she found
 Busie (as seem'd) about some wicked gin :
 Who, soone as she beheld that suddein stound,
 Lightly upstarted from the dustie ground,
 And with fell looke and hollow deadly gaze
 Stared on her awhile, as one astound,
 Ne had one word to speake for great amaze,
 But shewd by outward signes that dread her sence did
 daze.

At last, turning her feare to foolish wrath, 8
She askt, what devill had her thether brought,
And who she was, and what unwonted path
Had guided her, unwelcomed, unsought?
To which the Damzell, full of doubtfull thought,
Her mildly answer'd: "Beldame, be not wroth
With silly Virgin, by adventure brought
Unto your dwelling, ignorant and loth,
That crave but rowme to rest while tempest overblo'th."

With that adowne out of her christall eyne 9
Few trickling teares she softly forth let fall,
That like to orient perles did purely shyne
Upon her snowy cheeke; and therewithall
She sighed soft, that none so bestiall
Nor salvage hart, but ruth of her sad plight
Would make to melt, or pitteously appall;
And that vile Hag, all were her whole delight
In mischief, was much moved at so pitteous sight;

And gan recomfort her in her rude wyse, 10
With womanish compassion of her plaint,
Wiping the teares from her suffused eyes,
And bidding her sit downe, to rest her faint
And wearie limbs awhile. She, nothing quaint
Nor 'sdeignfull of so homely fashion,
Sith brought she was now to so hard constraint
Sate downe upon the dusty ground anon;
As glad of that small rest as Bird of tempest gon.

Tho gan she gather up her garments rent, 11
And her loose lockes to dight in order dew
With golden wreath and gorgeous ornament;
Whom such whenas the wicked Hag did vew,
She was astonisht at her heavenly hew,
And doubted her to deeme an earthly wight,
But or some Goddesse, or of Dianes crew,
And thought her to adore with humble spright:
T^o adore thing so divine as beauty were but right.

This wicked woman had a wicked sonne, 12
The comfort of her age and weary dayes,
A laesy loord, for nothing good to donne,
But stretched forth in ydlenesse alwayes ;
Ne ever cast his mind to covet prayse,
Or ply himselfe to any honest trade,
But all the day before the sunny rayes
He us'd to slug, or sleepe in slothfull shade :
Such laesinesse both lewd and poore attonce him made.

He, comming home at undertime, there found 13
The fayrest creature that he ever saw
Sitting beside his mother on the ground ;
The sight whereof did greatly him adaw,
And his base thought with terrour and with aw
So inly smot, that as one, which hath gaz'd
On the bright Sunne unwares, doth soone withdraw
His feeble eyne, with too much brightnes daz'd,
So stared he on her, and stood long while amaz'd.

Softly at last he gan his mother aske, 14
What mister wight that was, and whence deriv'd,
That in so straunge disguizement there did maske,
And by what accident she there arriv'd ?
But she, as one nigh of her wits depriv'd,
With nought but ghastly lookes him answered ;
Like to a ghost, that lately is reviv'd
From Stygian shores where late it wandered :
So both at her, and each at other wondered.

But the fayre Virgin was so meeke and myld, 15
That she to them vouchsafed to embace
Her goodly port, and to their senses vyld
Her gentle speach applyde, that in short space
She grew familiare in that desert place.
During which time the Chorle, through her so kind
And courtese use, conceiv'd affection bace,
And cast to love her in his brutish mind :
No love, but brutish lust, that was so beastly tind.

Closely the wicked flame his bowels brent, 16
 And shortly grew into outrageous fire ;
 Yet had he not the hart, nor hardiment,
 As unto her to utter his desire ;
 His caytive thought durst not so high aspire :
 But with soft sighes and lovely semblaunces
 He ween'd that his affection entire
 She should aread ; many resembraunces
 To her he made, and many kinde remembraunces.

Oft from the forrest wildings he did bring, 17
 Whose sides empurpled were with smyling red ;
 And oft young birds, which he had taught to sing,
 His maistresse praises sweetly caroled :
 Girlonds of flowres sometimes for her faire hed
 He fine would dight ; sometimes the squirrel wild
 He brought to her in bands, as conquered
 To be her thrall, his fellow-servant vild: [mild.
 All which she of him tooke with countenance meeke and

But, past a while, when she fit season saw 18
 To leave that desert mansion, she cast
 In secret wize herselfe thence to withdraw,
 For feare of mischief, which she did forecast
 Might by the witch or by her sonne compast.
 Her wearie Palfrey, closely as she might,
 Now well recovered after long repast,
 In his proud furnitures she freshly dight,
 His late miswandred wayes now to remeasure right.

And earely, ere the dawning day appear'd, 19
 She forth issewed, and on her journey went :
 She went in perill, of each noyse affeard,
 And of each shade that did it selfe present ;
 For still she feared to be overhent
 Of that vile hag, or her uncivile sonne ;
 Who when, too late awaking, well they kent
 That their fayre guest was gone, they both begonne
 To make exceeding mone, as they had beene undonne.

But that lewd lover did the most lament 20
 For her depart, that ever man did heare :
 He knockt his brest with desperate intent,
 And scratcht his face, and with his teeth did teare
 His rugged flesh, and rent his ragged heare ;
 That his sad mother, seeing his sore plight,
 Was greatly woe begon, and gan to feare
 Least his fraile senses were emperisht quight,
 And love to frenzy turnd, sith love is franticke hight.

All wayes shee sought him to restore to plight, 21
 With herbs, with charms, with counsel, and with
 teares ;

But tears, nor charms, nor herbs, nor counsell, might
 Asswage the fury which his entrails teares :
 So strong is passion that no reason heares.
 Tho, when all other helpes she saw to faile,
 She turnd her selfe backe to her wicked leares ;
 And by her divelish arts thought to prevaile
 To bring her backe againe, or worke her finall bale.

Eftesoones out of her hidden cave she cald 22
 An hideous beast of horrible aspect,
 That could the stoutest corage have appald ;
 Monstrous, mishapt, and all his backe was spect
 With thousand spots of colours quaint elect,
 Thereto so swifte that it all beasts did pas :
 Like never yet did living eie detect ;
 But likest it to an Hyena was,
 That feeds on wemens flesh, as others feede on gras.

It forth she cald, and gave it streight in charge 23
 Through thicke and thin her to poursew apace,
 Ne once to stay to rest, or breath at large,
 Till her hee had attaind and brought in place,
 Or quite devourd her beauties scornefull grace.
 The Monster, swifte as word that from her went,
 Went forth in haste, and did her footing trace
 So sure and swiftly, through his perfect sent
 And passing speede, that shortly he her overhent.

Whom when the fearefull Damzell nigh espide, 24
No need to bid her fast away to flie :
That ugly shape so sore her terrifide,
That it she shund no lesse then dread to die ;
And her flitt palfrey did so well apply
His nimble feet to her conceived feare,
That whilest his breath did strength to him supply,
From perill free he her away did beare ;
But when his force gan faile his pace gan wex areare.

Which whenas she perceiv'd, she was dismayd 25
At that same last extremity ful sore,
And of her safety greatly grew afraid.
And now she gan approach to the sea shore,
As it befell, that she could flie no more,
But yield herselfe to spoile of greedinesse :
Lightly she leaped, as a wight forlore,
From her dull horse, in desperate distresse,
And to her feet betooke her doubtfull sickennesse

Not halfe so fast the wicked Myrrha fled 26
From dread of her revenging fathers hond ;
Nor halfe so fast to save her maydenhed
Fled fearefull Daphne on th' Ægæan strond,
As Florimell fled from that Monster yond,
To reach the sea ere she of him were raught
For in the sea to drowne herselfe she fond,
Rather then of the tyrant to be caught :
Thereto fear gave her wings, and need her corage taught.

It fortun'd (high God did so ordaine) 27
As shee arrived on the roring shore,
In minde to leape into the mighty maine,
A little bote lay hoving her before,
In which there slept a fisher old and pore,
The whiles his nets were drying on the sand.
Into the same shee lept, and with the ore
Did thrust the shallop from the floting strand :
So safety fownd at sea which she fownd not at land.

The Monster, ready on the pray to sease, 28
Was of his forward hope deceived quight;
Ne durst assay to wade the perlous seas,
But greedily long gaping at the sight,
At last in vaine was forst to turne his flight,
And tell the idle tidings to his Dame:
Yet, to avenge his divelish despight,
He sett upon her Palfrey tired lame,
And slew him cruelly ere any reskew came.

And, after having him embowelled 29
To fill his hellish gorge, it chaunst a knight
To passe that way, as forth he travelled:
Yt was a goodly Swaine, and of great might,
As ever man that bloody field did fight;
But in vain sheows, that wont yong knights bewitch,
And courtly services, tooke no delight;
But rather joyd to bee then seemen sich,
For both to be and seeme to him was labor lich.

It was to weete the good Sir Satyrane, 30
That raungd abroad to seeke adventures wilde,
As was his wont, in forest and in plaine:
He was all armd in rugged steele unfilde,
As in the smoky forge it was compilde,
And in his Scutchin bore a Satyres hedd.
He comming present, where the Monster vilde
Upon that milke-white Palfreyes carcas fedd,
Unto his reskew ran, and greedily him spedd.

There well perceivd he that it was the horse 31
Whereon faire Florimell was wont to ride,
That of that feend was rent without remorse:
Much feared he least ought did ill betide
To that faire Maide, the flowre of wemens pride;
For her he dearely loved, and in all
His famous conquests highly magnifide:
Besides, her golden girdle, which did fall
From her in flight, he fownd, that did him sore apall.

Full of sad feare and doubtfull agony 32
Fiercely he flew upon that wicked feend,
And with huge strokes and cruell battery
Him forst to leave his pray, for to attend
Him selfe from deadly daunger to defend:
Full many wounds in his corrupted flesh
He did engrave, and muchell blood did spend,
Yet might not doe him die; but aie more fresh
And fierce he still appeard, the more he did him thresh.

He wist not how him to despoile of life, 33
Ne how to win the wished victory,
Sith him he saw still stronger grow through strife,
And him selfe weaker through infirmity.
Greatly he grew enrag'd, and furiously
Hurling his sword away he lightly lept
Upon the beast, that with great cruelty
Rored and raged to be underkept;
Yet he perforce him held, and strokes upon him hept.

As he that strives to stop a suddein flood, 34
And in strong bancks his violence enclose,
Forceth it swell above his wonted mood,
And largely overflow the fruitfull plaine,
That all the countrey seemes to be a Maine,
And the rich furrowes flote, all quite fordonne:
The wofull husbandman doth lowd complaine
To see his whole yeares labor lost so soone,
For which to God he made so many an idle boone.

So him he held, and did through might amate. 35
So long he held him, and him bett so long,
That at the last his fierceness gan abate,
And meekely stoup unto the victor strong:
Who, to avenge the implacable wrong
Which he supposed donne to Florimell,
Sought by all meanes his dolor to prolong,
Sith dint of steele his carcas could not quell;
His maker with her charmes had framed him so well.

The golden ribband, which that virgin wore 36
About her sclender waste, he tooke in hand,
And with it bownd the beast, that lowd did rore
For great despight of that unwonted band,
Yet dared not his victor to withstand,
But trembled like a lambe fled from the pray:
And all the way him followd on the strand,
As he had long bene learned to obay;
Yet never learned he such service till that day.

Thus as he led the Beast along the way, 37
He spide far off a mighty Giauntesse
Fast flying, on a Courser dapled gray,
From a bold knight that with great hardinesse
Her hard pursewd, and sought for to suppressse.
She bore before her lap a dolefull Squire,
Lying athwart her horse in great distresse,
Fast bounden hand and foote with cords of wire,
Whom she did meane to make the thrall of her desire.

Which whenas Satyrane beheld, in haste 38
He lefte his captive Beast at liberty,
And crost the nearest way, by which he cast
Her to encounter ere she passed by;
But she the way shund nathemore for thy,
But forward gallopt fast; which when he spyde,
His mighty speare he couched warily,
And at her ran: she, having him descryde,
Her selfe to fight addrest, and threw her lode aside.

Like as a Goshauke, that in foote doth beare 39
A trembling Culver, having spide on hight
An Eagle that with plummy wings doth sheare
The subtile ayre stouping with all his might,
The quarry throwes to ground with fell despight,
And to the batteill doth her selfe prepare:
So ran the Geauntesse unto the fight;
Her fyrie eyes with furious sparkes did stare,
And with blasphemous bannes high God in peeces tare.

She caught in hand an huge great yron mace, 40
Wherewith she many had of life depriv'd ;
But, ere the stroke could seize his aymed place,
His speare amids her sun-brode shield arriv'd :
Yet nathemore the steele asonder riv'd,
All were the beame in bignes like a mast,
Ne her out of the stedfast sadle driv'd ;
But, glauncing on the tempred metall, brast
In thousand shivers, and so forth beside her past.

Her Steed did stagger with that puisaunt strooke ;
But she no more was moved with that might
Then it had lighted on an aged Oke,
Or on the marble Pillour that is pight
Upon the top of Mount Olympus hight,
For the brave youthly Champions to assay
With burning charet wheelles it nigh to smite ;
But who that smites it mars his joyous play,
And is the spectacle of ruinous decay.

Yet, therewith sore enrag'd, with sterne regard 42
Her dreadfull weapon she to him addrest,
Which on his helmet martelled so hard
That made him low incline his lofty crest,
And bowd his battred visour to his brest :
Wherewith he was so stund that he n'ote ryde,
But reeled to and fro from east to west.
Which when his cruell enemy espyde,
She lightly unto him adjoyned syde to syde ;

And, on his collar laying puisaunt hand, 43
Out of his wavering seat him pluckt perforce,
Perforce him pluckt, unable to withstand
Or helpe himselfe ; and laying thwart her horse,
In loathly wise like to a carrion corse,
She bore him fast away. Which when the knight
That her pursewed saw, with great remorse
He nere was touched in his noble spright,
And gan encrease his speed as she encreast her flight.

Whom when as nigh approching she espyde, 44
 She threw away her burden angrily;
 For she list not the batteill to abide,
 But made her selfe more light away to fly:
 Yet her the hardy knight pursewd so nye
 That almost in the backe he oft her strake;
 But still, when him at hand she did espy,
 She turnd, and semblaunce of faire fight did make,
 But, when he stayd, to flight againe she did her take.

By this the good Sir Satyrane gan wake 45
 Out of his dreame that did him long entraunce,
 And, seeing none in place, he gan to make
 Exceeding mone, and curst that cruell chaunce
 Which reft from him so faire a chevisaunce.
 At length he spyde whereas that wofull Squyre,
 Whom he had reskewed from captivaunce
 Of his strong foe, lay tombled in the myre,
 Unable to arise, or foot or hand to styre.

To whom approching, well he mote perceive 46
 In that fowle plight a comely personage
 And lovely face, made fit for to deceive
 Fraile Ladies hart with loves consuming rage,
 Now in the blossome of his freshest age.
 He reard him up and loosd his yron bands,
 And after gan inquire his parentage,
 And how he fell into the Gyaunts hands,
 And who that was which chaced her along the lands.

Then trembling yet through feare the Squire bespake:
 "That Geauntesse Argante is behight,
 A daughter of the Titans which did make
 Warre against heven and heaped hils on hight
 To scale the skyes and put Jove from his right:
 Her syre Typhoeus was; who, mad through merth,
 And dronke with blood of men slaine by his might,
 Through incest her of his owne mother Earth
 Whylome begot, being but halfe twin of that berth:

“ For at that berth another Babe she bore ; 48
To weet, the mightie Ollyphant, that wrought
Great wreake to many errant knights of yore,
Till him Chylde Thopas to confusion brought.
These twinnes, men say, (a thing far passing thought)
Whiles in their mothers wombe enclosed they were,
Ere they into the lightsom world were brought,
In fleshly lust were mingled both yfere,
And in that monstrous wise did to the world appere.

“ So liv’d they ever after in like sin, 49
Gainst natures law and good behaveoure ;
But greatest shame was to that maiden twin,
Who, not content so fowly to devoure
Her native flesh and staine her brothers bowre,
Did wallow in all other fleshly myre,
And suffred beastes her body to deflowre,
So whot she burned in that lustfull fyre ;
Yet all that might not slake her sensuall desyre :

“ But over all the countrie she did raunge 50
To seeke young men to quench her flaming thrust,
And feed her fancy with delightfull chaunge :
Whom so she fittest findes to serve her lust,
Through her maine strength, in which she most doth
She with her bringes into a secret Ile, [trust,
Where in eternall bondage dye he must,
Or be the vassall of her pleasures vile,
And in all shamefull sort him selfe with her defile.

“ Me, seely wretch, she so at vauntage caught, 51
After she long in waite for me did lye,
And meant unto her prison to have brought,
Her lothsom pleasure there to satisfye ;
That thousand deathes me lever were to dye
Then breake the vow that to faire Columbello
I plighted have, and yet keepe stedfastly.
As for my name, it mistreth not to tell : [well.
Call me the Squire of Dames ; that me beseemeth

“But that bold knight, whom ye pursuing saw, 52
 That Geauntesse, is not such as she seemd,
 But a faire virgin that in martiall law
 And deedes of armes above all Dames is deemd,
 And above many knightes is eke esteemd
 For her great worth: She Palladine is hight.
 She you from death, you me from dread, redeemd;
 Ne any may that Monster match in fight,
 But she, or such as she, that is so chaste a wight.”

“Her well beseemes that Quest,” (quoth Satyrane) 53
 “But read, thou Squyre of Dames, what vow is this,
 Which thou upon thy selfe hast lately ta’ne?”
 “That shall I you recount,” (quoth he) “ywis,
 So be ye pleasd to pardon all amis.
 That gentle Lady whom I love and serve,
 After long suit and wearie servicis,
 Did aske me, how I could her love deserve,
 And how she might be sure that I would never swerve?”

“I, glad by any meanes her grace to gaine, 54
 Badd her commaund my life to save or spill.
 Eftsoones she badd me, with incessaunt paine
 To wander through the world abroad at will,
 And every where, where with my power or skill
 I might doe service unto gentle Dames,
 That I the same should faithfully fulfill; [names
 And at the twelve monethes end should bring their
 And pledges, as the spoiles of my victorious games.

“So well I to faire Ladies service did, 55
 And found such favour in their loving hartes,
 That ere the yeare his course had compassid,
 Thre hundred pledges for my good desartes,
 And thrice thre hundred thanks for my good partes,
 I with me brought, and did to her present:
 Which when she saw, more bent to eke my smartes
 Then to reward my trusty true intent,
 She gan for me devise a grievous punishment.

"To weete, that I my traveill should resume, 56
And with like labour walke the world arownd,
Ne ever to her presence should presume,
Till I so many other Dames had fownd,
The which, for all the suit I could propownd,
Would me refuse their pledges to afford,
But did abide for ever chaste and sownd."

"Ah! gentle Squyre," (quoth he) "tell at one word,
How many fownd'st thou such to put in thy record?"

"In deed, Sir knight," (said he) "one word may tell 57
All that I ever fownd so wisely stayd,
For onely three they were disposd so well;
And yet three yeares I now abroad have strayd,
To fynd them out." "Mote I," (then laughing sayd
The knight) "inquire of thee what were those three,
The which thy proffred curtesie denyd?
Or ill they seemed sure avizd to bee,
Or brutishly brought up, that nev'r did fashions see."

"The first which then refused me," (said hee) 58
"Certes was but a common Courtisane;
Yet flat refusd to have adoe with mee,
Because I could not give her many a Jane."
(Thereat full hartely laughed Satyrane.)
"The second was an holy Nunne to chose,
Which would not let me be her Chappellane,
Because she knew, she sayd, I would disclose
Her counsell, if she should her trust in me repose."

"The third a Damzell was of low degree, 59
Whom I in countrey cottage fownd by chaunce:
Full litle weened I that chastitee
Had lodging in so meane a maintenaunce;
Yet was she fayre, and in her countenaunce
Dwelt simple truth in seemely fashion.
Long thus I woo'd her with due observaunce,
In hope unto my pleasure to have won;
But was as far at last, as when I first begon."

“ Safe her, I never any woman found 60
That chastity did for it selfe embrace,
But were for other causes firme and sound ;
Either for want of handsome time and place,
Or else for feare of shame and fowle disgrace.
Thus am I hopelesse ever to attaine
My Ladies love in such a desperate case,
But all my dayes am like to waste in vaine,
Seeking to match the chaste with th’ unchaste Ladies
traine.”

“ Perdy,” (sayd Satyrane) “thou Squyre of Dames, 61
Great labour fondly hast thou hent in hand,
To get small thanks, and therewith many blames,
That may emongst Alcides labours stand.”
Thence backe returning to the former land,
Where late he left the Beast he overcame,
He found him not ; for he had broke his band,
And was returnd againe unto his Dame,
To tell what tydings of fayre Florimell became.



CANTO VIII.

*The Witch creates a snowy Lady
like to Florimell;
Who wrong'd by Carle, by Proteus sav'd,
is sought by Paridell.*

SO oft as I this history record, 1
My heart doth melt with meere compassion,
To thinke how causelesse, of her owne
This gentle Damzell, whom I write upon, [accord,
Should plonged be in such affliction
Without all hope of comfort or reliefe;
That sure, I weene, the hardest hart of stone
Would hardly finde to aggravate her grieve;
For misery craves rather mercy then reprieve.

But that accursed Hag, her hostesse late, 2
Had so enranckled her malicious hart,
That she desyrd th' abridgement of her fate,
Or long enlargement of her painefull smart.
Now when the Beast, which by her wicked art
Late foorth she sent, she backe retourning spyde
Tyde with her golden girdle; it a part
Of her rich spoyles whom he had earst destroyd
She weend, and wondrous gladnes to her hart applyde.

And, with it ronning hast'ly to her sonne, 3
Thought with that sight him much to have reliv'd;
Who, thereby deeming sure the thing as donne,
His former grieve with furie fresh reviv'd
Much more then earst, and would have algates riv'd
The hart out of his brest: for sith her dedd
He surely dempt, himselfe he thought depriv'd
Quite of all hope wherewith he long had fedd
His foolish malady, and long time had misledd.

With thought whereof exceeding mad he grew, 4
And in his rage his mother would have slaine,
Had she not fled into a secret mew,
Where she was wont her Sprightes to entertaine,
The maisters of her art: there was she faine
To call them all in order to her ayde,
And them conjure, upon eternall paine,
To counsell her, so carefully dismayd, [cayd.
How she might heale her sonne whose senses were de-

By their device, and her owne wicked wit, 5
She there deviz'd a wondrous worke to frame,
Whose like on earth was never framed yit;
That even Nature selfe envide the same,
And grudg'd to see the counterfet should shame
The thing it selfe: In hand she boldly tooke
To make another like the former Dame,
Another Florimell, in shape and looke
So lively and so like, that many it mistooke.

The substance, whereof she the body made, 6
Was purest snow in massy mould congeald,
Which she had gathered in a shady glade
Of the Riphœan hils, to her reveald
By errant Sprights, but from all men conceald:
The same she tempred with fine Mercury
And virgin wax that never yet was seald,
And mingled them with perfect vermily;
That like a lively sanguine it seemd to the eye.

In stead of eyes two burning lampes she set 7
In silver sockets, shyning like the skyes,
And a quicke moving Spirit did arret
To stirre and roll them like to womens eyes:
In stead of yellow lockes she did devyse
With golden wyre to weave her curled head;
Yet golden wyre was not so yellow thryse
As Florimells fayre heare: and, in the stead
Of life, she put a Spright to rule the carcas dead;

A wicked Spright, yfraught with fawning guyle 8
 And fayre resemblance above all the rest,
 Which with the Prince of Darkenes fell somewhyle
 From heavens blis and everlasting rest:
 Him needed not instruct which way were best
 Him selfe to fashion likest Florimell,
 Ne how to speake, ne how to use his gest;
 For he in counterfesaunce did excell,
 And all the wyles of wemens wits knew passing well.

Him shaped thus she deckt in garments gay, 9
 Which Florimell had left behind her late;
 That who so then her saw would surely say
 It was her selfe whom it did imitate,
 Or fayrer then her selfe, if ought algate
 Might fayrer be. And then she forth her brought
 Unto her sonne that lay in feeble state;
 Who seeing her gan streight upstart, and thought
 She was the Lady selfe whom he so long had sought.

Tho fast her clipping twixt his armes twayne, 10
 Extremely joyed in so happy sight,
 And soone forgot his former sickely payne:
 But she, the more to seeme such as she hight,
 Coily rebutted his embracement light;
 Yet still, with gentle countenaunce, retain'd
 Enough to hold a foole in vaine delight.
 Him long she so with shadowes entertain'd,
 As her Creatresse had in charge to her ordain'd.

Till on a day, as he disposed was 11
 To walke the woodes with that his Idole faire,
 Her to disport and idle time to pas
 In th' open freshnes of the gentle aire,
 A knight that way there chaunced to repaire;
 Yet knight he was not, but a boastfull swaine
 That deedes of armes had ever in despaire,
 Proud Braggadocchio, that in vaunting vaine
 His glory did repose, and credit did maintaine.

He, seeing with that Chorle so faire a wight, 12
Decked with many a costly ornament,
Much merveiled thereat, as well he might,
And thought that match a fowle disparagement:
His bloody speare eftesoones he boldly bent
Against the silly clowne, who dead through feare
Fell streight to ground in great astonishment.
"Villain," (sayd he) "this Lady is my deare;
Dy, if thou it gainesay: I will away her beare."

The fearefull Chorle durst not gainesay nor dooe, 13
But trembling stood, and yielded him the pray;
Who, finding litle leasure her to wooe,
On Tromparts steed her mounted without stay,
And without reskew led her quite away.
Proud man himselfe then Braggadochio deem'd,
And next to none after that happy day,
Being possessed of that spoyle, which seem'd
The fairest wight on ground, and most of men esteem'd.

But, when hee saw him selfe free from poursute, 14
He gan make gentle purpose to his Dame
With termes of love and lewdnesse dissolute;
For he could well his glozing speeches frame
To such vaine uses that him best became:
But she thereto would lend but light regard,
As seeming sory that she ever came
Into his powre, that used her so hard
To reave her honor, which she more then life prefard.

Thus as they two of kindnes treated long, 15
There them by chaunce encountred on the way
An armed knight upon a courser strong,
Whose trampling feete upon the hollow lay
Seemed to thunder, and did nigh affray
That Capons corage: yet he looked grim,
And faynd to cheare his lady in dismay,
Who seemd for feare to quake in every lim,
And her to save from outrage meekely prayed him.

Fiercely that straunger forward came ; and, nigh 16
Approching, with bold words and bitter threat
Bad that same boaster, as he mote, on high,
To leave to him that lady for excheat,
Or bide him batteill without further treat.
That challenge did too peremptory seeme,
And fild his senses with abashment great ;
Yet seeing nigh him jeopardy extreme,
He it dissembled well, and light seemd to esteeme ;

Saying, " Thou foolish knight, that weenst with words
To steale away that I with blowes have wonne,
And brought through points of many perilous swords :
But if thee list to see thy Courser ronne,
Or prove thy selfe, this sad encounter shonne,
And seeke els without hazard of thy hedd."
At those prowd words that other knight begonne
To wex exceeding wroth, and him aredd
To turne his steede about, or sure he should be dedd.

" Sith then," (said Braggadochio) " needes thou wilt
Thy daies abridge through prooffe of puissaunce,
Turne we our steeds ; that both in equall tilt
May meete againe, and each take happy chaunce."
This said, they both a furlongs mountenaunce
Retird their steeds, to ronne in even race ;
But Braggadochio, with his bloody launce,
Once having turnd, no more returnd his face,
But lefte his love to losse, and fled him selfe apace.

The knight, him seeing flie, had no regard 17
Him to poursew, but to the lady rode ;
And having her from Trompart lightly reard,
Upon his Courser sett the lovely lode,
And with her fled away without abode.
Well weened he, that fairest Florimell
It was with whom in company he yode,
And so her selfe did alwaies to him tell ;
So made him thinke himselfe in heven, that was in hell.

But Florimell her selfe was far away, 20
Driven to great distresse by fortune straunge,
And taught the carefull Mariner to play,
Sith late mischaunce had her compeld to chaunge
The land for sea, at randon there to raunge :
Yett there that cruell Queene avengeresse,
Not satisfyde so far her to estraunge
From courtly blis and wonted happinesse,
Did heape on her new waves of weary wretchednesse.

For being fled into the fishers bote 21
For refuge from the Monsters cruelty,
Long so she on the mighty maine did flote,
And with the tide drove forward carelesly ;
For th' ayre was milde and cleared was the skie,
And all his windes dan Aeolus did keepe
From stirring up their stormy enmity,
As pitying to see her waile and weepe :
But all the while the fisher did securely sleepe.

At last when, droncke with drowsinesse, he woke, 22
And saw his drover drive along the streame,
He was dismayd ; and thrise his brest he stroke,
For marveill of that accident extreame :
But when he saw that blazing beauties beame,
Which with rare light his bote did beautifye,
He marveild more, and thought he yet did dreame
Not well awakte ; or that some extasye
Assotted had his sence, or dazed was his eye.

But when her well avizing hee perceiv'd 23
To be no vision nor fantasticke sight,
Great comfort of her presence he conceiv'd,
And felt in his old corage new delight
To gin awake, and stir his frozen spright :
Tho rudely askte her, how she thether came ?
" Ah ! " (sayd she) " father, I note read aright
What hard misfortune brought me to this same ;
Yet am I glad that here I now in safety ame.

“ But thou, good man, sith far in sea we bee, 24
And the great waters gin apace to swell,
That now no more we can the mayn-land see,
Have care, I pray, to guide the cock-bote well,
Least worse on sea then us on land befell.”
Thereat th’ old man did nought but fondly grin,
And saide his boat the way could wisely tell;
But his deceitfull eyes did never lin
To looke on her faire face and marke her snowy skin.

The sight whereof in his congealed flesh 25
Infixt such secrete sting of greedy lust,
That the drie withered stocke it gan refresh,
And kindled heat that soone in flame forth brust:
The driest wood is soonest burnt to dust.
Rudely to her he lept, and his rough hond
Where ill became him rashly would have thrust;
But she with angry scorne did him withstond,
And shamefully reproved for his rudenes fond.

But he, that never good nor maners knew, 26
Her sharpe rebuke full litle did esteeme;
Hard is to teach an old horse amble trew:
The inward smoke, that did before but steeme,
Broke into open fire and rage extreme;
And now he strength gan adde unto his will,
Forcyng to doe that did him fowle misseeme.
Beastly he threwe her downe, ne car’d to spill
Her garments gay with scales of fish that all did fill.

The silly virgin strove him to withstand 27
All that she might, and him in vaine revild:
Shee struggled strongly both with foote and hand
To save her honor from that villaine vilde,
And cride to heven, from humane help exild.
O! ye brave knights, that boast this Ladies love,
Where be ye now, when she is nigh defild
Of filthy wretch? well may she you reprove
Of falsehood or of slouth, when most it may behove.

But if that thou, Sir Satyran, didst weete, 28
Or thou, Sir Peridure, her sory state,
How soone would yee assemble many a fleete,
To fetch from sea that ye at land lost late!
Towres, citties, kingdomes, ye would ruinate
In your avengement and despiteous rage,
Ne ought your burning fury mote abate;
But if Sir Calidore could it presage,
No living creature could his cruelty asswage.

But sith that none of all her knights is nye, 29
See how the heavens, of voluntary grace
And soveraine favor towards chastity,
Doe succor send to her distressed cace:
So much high God doth innocence embrace.
It fortun'd, whilest thus she stifly strove,
And the wide sea importuned long space
With shrilling shriekes, Proteus abroad did rove,
Along the fomy waves driving his finny drove.

Proteus is Shepheard of the seas of yore, 30
And hath the charge of Neptunes mighty heard;
An aged sire with head all frowy hore,
And sprinckled frost upon his deawy beard:
Who when those pittifull outcries he heard
Through all the seas so ruefully resownd,
His charett swifte in hast he thether steard,
Which with a teeme of scaly Phocas bownd
Was drawne upon the waves that fomed him arownd.

And comming to that Fishers wandring bote, 31
That went at will withouten card or sayle,
He therein saw that yrkesome sight, which smote
Deepe indignation and compassion frayle
Into his hart attonce: streight did he hayle
The greedy villein from his hoped pray,
Of which he now did very little fayle,
And with his staffe, that drives his heard astray,
Him bett so sore, that life and sence did much dismay.

The whiles the pitteous Lady up did ryse, 32
 Ruffled and fowly raid with filthy soyle,
 And blubbred face with teares of her faire eyes :
 Her heart nigh broken was with weary toyle,
 To save her selfe from that outrageous spoyle ;
 But when she looked up, to weet what wight
 Had her from so infamous fact assoyld,
 For shame, but more for feare of his grim sight,
 Downe in her lap she hid her face, and lowdly shright.

Her selfe not saved yet from daunger dredd 33
 She thought, but chaung'd from one to other feare :
 Like as a fearefull partridge, that is fledd
 From the sharpe hauke which her attached neare,
 And fals to ground to seeke for succor theare,
 Whereas the hungry Spaniells she does spye
 With greedy jawes her ready for to teare :
 In such distresse and sad perplexity
 Was Florimell, when Proteus she did see her by.

But he endeavored with speaches milde 34
 Her to recomfort, and accourage bold,
 Bidding her feare no more her foeman vilde,
 Nor doubt himselfe ; and who he was her told :
 Yet all that could not from affright her hold,
 Ne to recomfort her at all prevayld ;
 For her faint hart was with the frosen cold
 Benumbd so inly, that her wits nigh fayld,
 And all her sences with abashment quite were quayld.

Her up betwixt his rugged hands he reard, 35
 And with his frory lips full softly kist,
 Whiles the cold ysickles from his rough beard
 Dropped adowne upon her yvory brest :
 Yet he him selfe so busily addrest,
 That her out of astonishment he wrought ;
 And out of that same fishers filthy nest
 Removing her, into his charet brought,
 And there with many gentle termes her faire besought.

But that old leachour, which with bold assault 36
That beautie durst presume to violate,
He cast to punish for his hainous fault :
Then tooke he him, yet trembling sith of late,
And tyde behind his charet, to aggrate
The virgin whom he had abusde so sore ;
So drag'd him through the waves in scornfull state,
And after cast him up upon the shore ;
But Florimell with him unto his bowre he bore.

His bowre is in the bottom of the maine, 37
Under a mightie rocke, gainst which doe rave
The roring billowes in their proud disdaine,
That with the angry working of the wave
Therein is eaten out an hollow cave,
That seemes rough Masons hand with engines keene
Had long while laboured it to engrave :
There was his wonne ; ne living wight was seene
Save one old Nymph, hight Panope, to keepe it cleane.

Thether he brought the sory Florimell, 38
And entertained her the best he might,
And Panope her entertaind eke well,
As an immortall mote a mortall wight,
To winne her liking unto his delight :
With flattering wordes he sweetly wooed her,
And offered faire guiftes t' allure her sight ;
But she both offers and the offerer
Despysde, and all the fawning of the flatterer.

Dayly he tempted her with this or that, 39
And never suffred her to be at rest ;
But evermore she him refused flat,
And all his fained kindnes did detest,
So firmly she had sealed up her brest.
Sometimes he boasted that a God he hight,
But she a mortall creature loved best :
Then he would make him selfe a mortall wight ;
But then she said she lov'd none, but a Faery knight.

Then like a Faerie knight him selfe he drest, 40
 For every shape on him he could endew;
 Then like a king he was to her exprest,
 And offred kingdoms unto her in vew,
 To be his Leman and his Lady trew:
 But when all this he nothing saw prevaile,
 With harder meanes he cast her to subdew,
 And with sharpe threatates her often did assayle;
 So thinking for to make her stubborne corage quayle.

To dreadfull shapes he did him selfe transforme; 41
 Now like a Gyaunt; now like to a feend;
 Then like a Centaure; then like to a storme
 Raging within the waves: thereby he weend
 Her will to win unto his wished eend;
 But when with feare, nor favour, nor with all
 He els could doe, he saw him selfe esteemd,
 Downe in a Dongeon deepe he let her fall,
 And threatned there to make her his eternall thrall.

Eternall thraldome was to her more lief 42
 Then losse of chastitie, or chaunge of love:
 Dye had she rather in tormenting grieffe
 Then any should of falsenesse her reprove,
 Or loosenes, that she lightly did remove.
 Most vertuous virgin! glory be thy meed,
 And crowne of heavenly prayse with Saintes above,
 Where most sweet hymmes of this thy famous deed
 Are still amongst them song, that far my rymes exceed.

Fit song of Angels caroled to bee! 43
 But yet whatso my feeble Muse can frame
 Shalbe t' advance thy goodly chastitee,
 And to enroll thy memorable name
 In th' heart of every honourable Dame,
 That they thy vertuous deedes may imitate,
 And be partakers of thy endlesse fame.
 Yt yrkes me leave thee in this wofull state,
 To tell of Satyrane where I him left of late.

Who having ended with that Squyre of Dames 44
A long discourse of his adventures vayne,
The which himselfe then Ladies more defames,
And finding not th' Hyena to be slayne,
With that same Squyre retourned back againe
To his first way. And, as they forward went,
They spyde a knight fayre pricking on the playne,
As if he were on some adventure bent,
And in his port appeared manly hardiment.

Sir Satyrane him towards did addresse, 45
To weet what wight he was, and what his quest;
And, comming nigh, eftsoones he gan to gesse,
Both by the burning hart which on his brest
He bare, and by the colours in his crest,
That Paridell it was. Tho to him yode,
And him saluting as beseemed best,
Gan first inquire of tydings farre abroad;
And afterwarde on what adventure now he rode.

Who thereto answering said: "The tydings bad, 46
Which now in Faery court all men doe tell,
Which turned hath great mirth to mourning sad,
Is the late ruine of proud Marinell,
And suddein parture of faire Florimell
To find him forth: and after her are gone
All the brave knightes that doen in armes excell
To savegard her ywandred all alone:
Emongst the rest my lott (unworthy) is to be one."

"Ah! gentle knight," (said then Sir Satyrane) 47
"Thy labour all is lost, I greatly dread,
That hast a thanklesse service on thee ta'ne,
And offrest sacrifice unto the dead:
For dead, I surely doubt, thou maist aread
Henceforth for ever Florimell to bee;
That all the noble knights of Maydenhead,
Which her ador'd, may sore repent with mee,
And all faire Ladies may for ever sory bee."

Which wordes when Paridell had heard, his hew 48
Gan greatly chaung, and seemd dismaid to bee;
Then sayd: "Fayre Sir, how may I weene it trew,
That ye doe tell in such uncerteintee?
Or speake ye of report, or did ye see
Just cause of dread, that makes ye doubt so sore?
For, perdie, elles how mote it ever bee,
That ever hand should dare for to engore
Her noble blood? The hevens such crueltie abhore."

"These eyes did see that they will ever rew 49
To have seene," (quoth he) "when as a monstrous
The Palfrey whereon she did travell slew, [beast
And of his bowels made his bloody feast:
Which speaking token sheweth at the least
Her certeine losse, if not her sure decay:
Besides, that more suspicion encreast,
I found her golden girdle cast astray,
Distaynd with dirt and blood, as relique of the pray."

"Ah me!" (said Paridell) "the signes be sadd; 50
And, but God turne the same to good sooth say,
That Ladies safetie is sore to be dradd:
Yet will I not forsake my forward way,
Till triall doe more certeine truth bewray."
"Faire Sir," (qd. he) "well may it you succeed;
Ne long shall Satyrane behind you stay,
But to the rest, which in this Quest proceed,
My labour adde, and be partaker of their speed."

"Ye noble knights," (said then the Squyre of Dames)
"Well may yee speede in so praiseworthy payne!
But sith the Sunne now ginnes to slake his beames
In deawy vapours of the westerne mayne,
And lose the teme out of his weary wayne,
Mote not mislike you also to abate
Your zealous hast, till morrow next againe
Both light of heven and strength of men relate:
Which if ye please, to yonder castle turne your gate."

That counsell pleased well: so all yfere 52
Forth marched to a Castle them before;
Where soone arryving they restrained were
Of ready entraunce, which ought evermore
To errant knights be commune: wondrous sore
Thereat displeasd they were, till that young Squyre
Gan them informe the cause, why that same dore
Was shut to all which lodging did desyre:
The which to let you weet will further time requyre.



CANTO IX.

*Malbecco will no straunge knights host,
For peevish gealosy.
Paridell giusts with Britomart:
both shew their auncestry.*

REDOUBTED knights, and honorable Dames,
To whom I leuell all my labours end,
Right sore I feare, least with unworthy
blames

This odious argument my rymes should shend,
Or ought your goodly patience offend,
Whiles of a wanton Lady I doe write,
Which with her loose incontinence doth blend
The shyning glory of your soveraine light;
And knighthood fowle defaced by a faithlesse knight.

But never let th' ensample of the bad 2
Offend the good; for good, by paragone
Of evill, may more notably be rad,
As white seemes fayrer matcht with blacke attone;
Ne all are shamed by the fault of one:
For lo! in heven, whereas all goodnes is,
Emongst the Angels, a whole legione
Of wicked Sprighthes did fall from happy blis;
What wonder then if one, of women all, did mis?

Then listen, Lordings, if ye list to weet 3
The cause why Satyrane and Paridell
Mote not be entertaynd, as seemed meet,
Into that Castle, (as that Squyre does tell.)
"Therein a cancred crabbed Carle does dwell,
That has no skill of Court nor courtesie,
Ne cares what men say of him, ill or well;
For all his dayes he drownes in privitie,
Yet has full large to live and spend at libertie.

“But all his mind is set on mucky pelfe, 4
To hoord up heapes of evill gotten masse,
For which he others wrongs, and wreckes himselfe :
Yet is he lincked to a lovely lasse,
Whose beauty doth her bounty far surpasse ;
The which to him both far unequall yeares,
And also far unlike conditions has ;
For she does joy to play emongst her peares,
And to be free from hard restraynt and gealous feares.

“But he is old, and withered like hay, 5
Unfit faire Ladies service to supply ;
The privie guilt whereof makes him alway
Suspect her truth, and keepe continuall spy
Upon her with his other blinked eye ;
Ne suffreth he resort of living wight
Approch to her, ne keepe her company,
But in close bowre her mewes from all mens sight,
Depriv'd of kindly joy and naturall delight.

“Malbecco he, and Hellenore she hight ; 6
Unfitly yokt together in one teeme.
That is the cause why never any knight
Is suffred here to enter, but he seeme
Such as no doubt of him he neede misdeeme.”
Thereat Sir Satyrane gan smyle, and say ;
“Extremely mad the man I surely deeme,
That weenes with watch and hard restraynt to stay
A womans will, which is disposd to go astray.

“In vaine he feares that which he cannot shonne ; 7
For who wotes not, that womans subtiltyes
Can guylen Argus, when she list misdonne ?
It is not yron bandes, nor hundred eyes,
Nor brasen walls, nor many wakefull spyes,
That can withhold her wilfull wandring feet ;
But fast goodwill, with gentle courtesyes,
And timely service to her pleasures meet,
May her perhaps containe, that else would algates fleet.”

“Then is he not more mad,” (sayd Paridell) 8
“That hath himselfe unto such service sold,
In dolefull thraldome all his dayes to dwell?
For sure a foole I doe him firmly hold,
That loves his fetters, though they were of gold.
But why doe wee devise of others ill,
Whyles thus we suffer this same dotard old
To keepe us out, in scorne of his owne will,
And rather do not ransack all, and him selfe kill?”

“Nay, let us first” (sayd Satyrane) “entreat 9
The man by gentle meanes to let us in,
And afterwarde affray with cruell threat,
Ere that we to efforce it doe begin:
Then, if all fayle, we will by force it win,
And eke reward the wretch for his mesprise,
As may be worthy of his haynous sin.”
That counsell pleasd: then Paridell did rise,
And to the Castle gate approcht in quiet wise.

Whereat soft knocking entrance he desyrd. 10
The good man selfe, which then the Porter playd,
Him answered, that all were now retyrd
Unto their rest, and all the keyes conveyd
Unto their maister, who in bed was layd,
That none him durst awake out of his dreame;
And therefore them of patience gently prayd.
Then Paridell began to chaunge his theme,
And threatned him with force and punishment extreme:

But all in vaine, for nought mote him relent. 11
And now so long before the wicket fast
They wayted, that the night was forward spent,
And the faire welkin fowly overcast
Gan blowen up a bitter stormy blast,
With showre and hayle so horrible and dred,
That this faire many were compeld at last
To fly for succour to a little shed,
The which beside the gate for swyne was ordered.

It fortun'd, soone after they were gone, 12
Another knight, whom tempest thether brought,
Came to that Castle, and with earnest mone,
Like as the rest, late entrance deare besought :
But, like so as the rest, he prayd for nought ;
For flatly he of entrance was refusd.
Sorely thereat he was displeasd, and thought
How to avenge himselfe so sore abusd,
And evermore the Carle of courtesie accusd.

But, to avoyde th' intollerable stowre, 13
He was compeld to seeke some refuge neare,
And to that shed, to shrowd him from the showre,
He came, which full of guests he found whyleare,
So as he was not let to enter there :
Whereat he gan to wex exceeding wroth,
And swore that he would lodge with them yfere,
Or them dislodg, all were they liefe or loth ;
And so defyde them each, and so defyde them both.

Both were full loth to leave that needfull tent, 14
And both full loth in darknesse to debate ;
Yet both full liefe him lodging to have lent,
And both full liefe his boasting to abate :
But chiefly Paridell his hart did grate
To heare him threaten so despightfully,
As if he did a dogge in kenell rate
That durst not barke ; and rather had he dy
Then, when he was defyde, in coward corner ly.

Tho hastily remounting to his steed 15
He forth issew'd : like as a boystrous winde,
Which in th' earthes hollow caves hath long ben hid
And shut up fast within her prisons blind,
Makes the huge element, against her kinde,
To move and tremble as it were aghast,
Untill that it an issew forth may finde :
Then forth it breakes, and with his furious blast
Confounds both land and seas, and skyes doth overcast.

Their steel-hed speares they strongly coucht, and met
Together with impetuous rage and forse,
That with the terrour of their fierce affret
They rudely drove to ground both man and horse,
That each awhile lay like a sencelesse corse.
But Paridell sore brused with the blow
Could not arise, the counterchaunge to scorse,
Till that young Squyre him reared from below ;
Thendrew he his brightsword, and gan about him throw.

But Satyrane forth stepping did them stay, 17
And with faire treaty pacifide their yre.
Then, when they were accorded from the fray,
Against that Castles Lord they gan conspire,
To heape on him dew vengeance for his hire.
They beene agreed ; and to the gates they goe
To burn the same with unquenchable fire,
And that uncurteous Carle, their commune foe,
To doe fowle death to die, or wrap in grievous woe.

Malbecco, seeing them resolv'd in deed 18
To flame the gates, and hearing them to call
For fire in earnest, ran with fearfull speed,
And to them calling from the castle wall,
Besought them humbly him to beare withall,
As ignorant of servants bad abuse
And slacke attendaunce unto straungers call.
The knights were willing all things to excuse, [fuse.
Though nought belev'd, and entraunce late did not re-

They beene ybrought into a comely bowre, 19
And servd of all things that mote needfull bee ;
Yet secretly their hoste did on them lowre,
And welcomde more for feare then charitee ;
But they dissembled what they did not see,
And welcomed themselves. Each gan undight
Their garments wett, and weary armour free,
To dry them selves by Vulcanes flaming light,
And eke their lately bruized parts to bring in plight.

And eke that straunger knight emongst the rest 20
Was for like need enforst to disaray :
Tho, whenas vailed was her lofty crest,
Her golden locks, that were in tramells gay
Upbouden, did them selves adowne display
And raught unto her heeles ; like sunny beames,
That in a cloud their light did long time stay,
Their vapour vaded, shewe their golden gleames,
And through the persant aire shoote forth their azure
streames.

Shee also dofte her heavy haberjeon, 21
Which the faire feature of her limbs did hyde ;
And her wellplighted frock, which she did won
To tucke about her short when she did ryde,
Shee low let fall, that flowd from her lanck syde
Downe to her foot with carelesse modestee.
Then of them all she plainly was espyde
To be a woman wight, unwist to bee,
The fairest woman wight that ever eie did see.

Like as Bellona being late returnd 22
From slaughter of the Giaunts conquered ;
Where proud Encelade, whose wide nosethrills burnd
With breathed flames, like to a furnace redd,
Transfixed with her speare downe tombled dedd
From top of Hemus by him heaped hye,
Hath loosd her helmet from her lofty hedd,
And her Gorgonian shield gins to untye
From her lefte arme, to rest in glorious victorye.

Which whenas they beheld, they smitten were 23
With great amazement of so wondrous sight ;
And each on other, and they all on her,
Stood gazing ; as if suddein great affright
Had them surprizd. At last, avising right
Her goodly personage and glorious hew,
Which they so much mistooke, they tooke delight
In their first error, and yett still anew
With wonder of her beauty fed their hongry vew.

Yet note their hongry vew be satisfide, 24
But seeing still the more desir'd to see,
And ever firmly fixed did abide
In contemplation of divinitee :
But most they mervaild at her chevalree
And noble prowesse, which they had approv'd,
That much they faynd to know who she mote bee ;
Yet none of all them her thereof amov'd,
Yet every one her likte, and every one her lov'd.

And Paridell, though partly discontent
With his late fall and fowle indignity,
Yet was soone wonne his malice to relent,
Through gracious regard of her faire eye,
And knightly worth which he too late did try,
Yet tried did adore. Supper was dight ;
Then they Malbecco prayd of courtesy,
That of his lady they might have the sight
And company at meat, to doe them more delight.

But he, to shifte their curious request, 26
Gan causen why she could not come in place ;
Her crased helth, her late recourse to rest,
And humid evening ill for sicke folkes cace ;
But none of those excuses could take place,
Ne would they eate till she in presence came.
Shee came in presence with right comely grace,
And fairely them saluted, as became,
And shewd her selfe in all a gentle courteous Dame.

They sate to meat ; and Satyrane his chaunce 27
Was her before, and Paridell beside ;
But he him selfe sate looking still askaunce
Gainst Britomart, and ever closely eide
Sir Satyrane, that glaunces might not glide :
But his blinde eie, that sided Paridell,
All his demeasnure from his sight did hide :
On her faire face so did he feede his fill,
And sent close messages of love to her at will.

And ever and anone, when none was ware, 28
 With speaking lookes, that close embassage bore,
 He rov'd at her, and told his secret care ;
 For all that art he learned had of yore :
 Ne was she ignoraunt of that leud lore,
 But in his eye his meaning wisely redd,
 And with the like him aunswerd evermore.
 Shee sent at him one fyrie dart, whose hedd
 Empoised was with privy lust and gealous dredd.

He from that deadly throw made no defence, 29
 But to the wound his weake heart opened wyde :
 The wicked engine through false influence
 Past through his eies, and secretly did glyde
 Into his heart, which it did sorely gryde.
 But nothing new to him was that same paine,
 Ne paine at all ; for he so ofte had tryde
 The powre thereof, and lov'd so oft in vaine,
 That thing of course he counted love to entertaine.

Thenceforth to her he sought to intimate 30
 His inward griefe, by meanes to him well knowne :
 Now Bacchus fruit out of the silver plate
 He on the table dasht, as overthrowne,
 Or of the fruitfull liquor overflowne ;
 And by the dauncing bubbles did divine,
 Or therein write to lett his love be showne ;
 Which well she redd out of the learned line :
 A sacrament prophane in mistery of wine.

And, when so of his hand the pledge she raught, 31
 The guilty cup she fained to mistake,
 And in her lap did shed her idle draught,
 Shewing desire her inward flame to slake.
 By such close signes they secret way did make
 Unto their wils, and one eies watch escape :
 Two eies him needeth, for to watch and wake,
 Who lovers will deceive. Thus was the ape,
 By their faire handling, put into Malbeccoes cape.

Now, when of meats and drinks they had their fill, 32
Purpose was moved by that gentle Dame
Unto those knights adventurous, to tell
Of deeds of armes which unto them became,
And every one his kindred and his name.
Then Paridell, in whom a kindly pride
Of gracious speach and skill his words to frame
Abounded, being yglad of so fitte tide
Him to commend to her, thus spake, of al well eide

“Troy, that art now nought but an idle name, 33
And in thine ashes buried low dost lie,
Though whilome far much greater then thy fame,
Before that angry Gods and cruell skie
Upon thee heapt a direfull destinie ;
What boots it boast thy glorious descent,
And fetch from heven thy great genealogie,
Sith all thy worthie prayses being blent
Their offspring hath embaste, and later glory shent ?

“Most famous Worthy of the world, by whome 34
That warre was kindled which did Troy inflame,
And stately towres of Ilion whilome
Brought unto balefull ruine, was by name
Sir Paris far renownd through noble fame ;
Who, through great prowesse and bold hardinesse,
From Lacedæmon fetcht the fayrest Dame
That ever Greece did boast, or knight possesse,
Whom Venus to him gave for meed of worthinesse ;

“Fayre Helene, flowre of beautie excellent, 35
And gylond of the mighty Conquerours,
That madest many Ladies deare lament
The heaveie losse of their brave Paramours,
Which they far off beheld from Trojan toures,
And saw the fieldes of faire Scamander strowne
With carcasses of noble warrioures
Whose fruitlesse lives were under furrow sowne,
And Xanthus sandy bankes with blood all overflowne.

“From him my linage I derive aright, 36
Who long before the ten yeares siege of Troy,
Whiles yet on Ida he a shepeheard hight,
On faire Oenone got a lovely boy,
Whom, for remembrance of her passed joy,
She, of his Father, Parius did name ;
Who, after Greekes did Priams realme destroy,
Gathred the Trojan reliques sav’d from flame,
And with them sayling thence to th’ isle of Paros came.

“That was by him cald Paros, which before 37
Hight Nausa : there he many yeares did raine,
And built Nausicle by the Pontick shore ;
The which he dying lefte next in remaine
To Paridas his sonne,
From whom I Paridell by kin descend :
But for faire ladies love and glories gaine,
My native soile have lefte, my dayes to spend
In sewing deeds of armes, my lives and labors end.”

Whenas the noble Britomart heard tell 38
Of Trojan warres and Priams citie sackt,
The ruefull story of Sir Paridell,
She was empassiond at that piteous act,
With zelous envy of Greekes cruell fact
Against that nation, from whose race of old
She heard that she was lineally extract ;
For noble Britons sprong from Trojans bold,
And Troynovant was built of old Troyes ashes cold.

Then, sighing soft awhile, at last she thus : 39
“O lamentable fall of famous towne !
Which raignd so many yeares victorious,
And of all Asie bore the soveraine crowne,
In one sad night consumd and throwne downe :
What stony hart, that heares thy haplesse fate,
Is not empierst with deepe compassiowne,
And makes ensample of mans wretched state,
That floures so fresh at morne, and fades at evening late ?

“Behold, Sir, how your pitifull complaint 40
Hath fownd another partner of your payne;
For nothing may impresse so deare constraint
As countries cause, and commune foes disdayne.
But if it should not grieve you backe agayne
To turne your course, I would to heare desyre
What to Aeneas fell; sith that men sayne
He was not in the cities wofull fyre
Consum’d, but did him selfe to safety retyre.”

“Anchyses sonne, begott of Venus fayre,” 41
Said he, “out of the flames for safegard fled,
And with a remnant did to sea repayre;
Where he through fatall errour long was led
Full many yeares, and weetlesse wandered
From shore to shore emongst the Lybick sandes,
Ere rest he fownd. Much there he suffered,
And many perilles past in forreine landes,
To save his people sad from victours vengefull handes.

“At last in Latium he did arryve, 42
Where he with cruell warre was entertaind
Of th’inland folke, which sought him backe to drive,
Till he with old Latinus was constraind
To contract wedlock, (so the fates ordaind)
Wedlocke contract in blood, and eke in blood
Accomplished, that many deare complained:
The rivall slaine, the victour through the flood
Escaped hardly, hardly praisd his wedlock good.

“Yet, after all, he victour did survive, 43
And with Latinus did the kingdom part;
But after, when both nations gan to strive
Into their names the title to convart,
His sonne Iulus did from thence depart
With all the warlike youth of Trojans bloud,
And in long Alba plast his throne apart;
Where faire it florished and long time stoud,
Till Romulus, renewing it, to Rome remoud.”

"There; there," (said Britomart) "afresh appeared 44
The glory of the later world to spring,
And Troy againe out of her dust was reard
To sitt in second seat of souveraine king
Of all the world, under her governing.
But a third kingdom yet is to arise
Out of the Trojans scattered ofspring,
That in all glory and great enterprise,
Both first and second Troy shall dare to equalise.

"It Troynovant is hight, that with the waves 45
Of wealthy Thamys washed is along,
Upon whose stubborne neck, whereat he raves
With roring rage, and sore him selfe does throng,
That all men feare to tempt his billowes strong,
She fastned hath her foot; which stands so hy,
That it a wonder of the world is song
In forreine landes; and all which passen by,
Beholding it from farre, doe thinke it threatetheskye.

"The Trojan Brute did first that citie fownd, 46
And Hygate made the meare thereof by west,
And Overt gate by North: that is the bownd
Toward the land; two rivers bownd the rest.
So huge a scope at first him seemed best,
To be the compasse of his kingdomes seat:
So huge a mind could not in lesser rest,
Ne in small meares containe his glory great,
That Albion had conquered first by warlike feat."

"Ah! fairest Lady knight," (said Paridell) 47
"Pardon, I pray, my heedlesse oversight,
Who had forgot that whylome I hard tell
From aged Mnemon; for my wits beene light.
Indeed he said, (if I remember right)
That of the antique Trojan stocke there grew
Another plant, that raught to wondrous hight,
And far abroad his mightie braunches threw
Into the utmost Angle of the world he knew.

“For that same Brute, whom much he did aduance 48
In all his speach, was Sylvius his sonne,
Whom having slain through luckles arrowes glaunce,
He fled for feare of that he had misdonne,
Or els for shame, so fowle reproch to shonne,
And with him ledd to sea an youthly trayne;
Where wearie wandring they long time did wonne,
And many fortunes prov'd in th' Ocean mayne,
And great adventures found, that now were long to
sayne.

“At last by fatall course they driven were 49
Into an Island spacious and brode,
The furthest North that did to them appeare:
Which, after rest, they, seeking farre abrode,
Found it the fittest soyle for their abode,
Fruitfull of all thinges fitt for living foode,
But wholly waste and void of peoples trode,
Save an huge nation of the Geaunts broode
That fed on living flesh, and dronck mens vitall blood.

“Whom he, through wearie wars and labours long, 50
Subdewd with losse of many Britons bold:
In which the great Goemagot of strong
Corineus, and Coulin of Debon old,
Were overthrowne and laide on th' earth full cold,
Which quaked under their so hideous masse;
A famous history to bee enrold
In everlasting moniments of brasse,
That all the antique Worthies merits far did passe.

“His worke great Troynovant, his worke is eke 51
Fair Lincolne, both renowned far away;
That who from East to West will endlong seeke,
Cannot two fairer Cities find this day,
Except Cleopolis: so heard I say
Old Mnemon. Therefore, Sir, I greet you well
Your countrey kin; and you entyrelly pray
Of pardon for the strife, which late befell
Betwixt us both unknowne.” So ended Paridell.

But all the while that he these speeches spent, 52
Upon his lips hong faire Dame Hellenore
With vigilant regard and dew attent,
Fashioning worldes of fancies evermore
In her fraile witt, that now her quite forlore :
The whiles unwares away her wondring eye
And greedy eares her weake hart from her bore ;
Which he perceiving, ever privily,
In speaking many false belgardes at her let fly.

So long these knightes discoursed diversly 53
Of straunge affaires, and noble hardiment,
Which they had past with mickle jeopardy,
That now the humid night was farforth spent,
And heavenly lampes were halfendeale ybrent :
Which th' old man seeing wel, who too long thought
Every discourse, and every argument,
Which by the houres he measured, besought
Them go to rest. So all unto their bowres were
brought.



CANTO X.

*Paridell rapeth Hellenore:
Malbecco her poursewes;
Fynds emongst Satyres, whence with him
To turne she doth refuse.*

THE morow next, so soone as Phœbus Lamp
Bewrayed had the world with early light,
And fresh Aurora had the shady damp
Out of the goodly heven amoved quight,
Faïre Britomart and that same Faery knight
Uprose, forth on their journey for to wend:
But Paridell complaynd, that his late fight
With Britomart so sore did him offend,
That ryde he could not, till his hurts he did amend.

So forth they far'd; but he behind them stayd,
Maulgre his host, who grudged grivously
To house a guest that would be needes obayd,
And of his owne him lefte not liberty:
Might wanting measure moveth surquedry.
Two things he feared, but the third was death;
That fiers youngmans unruly maystery;
His money, which he lov'd as living breath;
And his faïre wife, whom honest long he kept uneath.

But patience perforce, he must abie
What fortune and his fate on him will lay;
Fond is the feare that findes no remedie:
Yet warily he watcheth every way,
By which he feareth evill happen may;
So th' evill thinkes by watching to prevent:
Ne doth he suffer her, nor night nor day,
Out of his sight her selfe once to absent.
So doth he punish her, and eke himselfe torment.

But Paridell kept better watch then hee, 4
A fit occasion for his turne to finde.
False love! why do men say thou canst not see,
And in their foolish fancy feigne thee blinde,
That with thy charmes the sharpest sight doest binde,
And to thy will abuse? Thou walkest free,
And seest every secret of the minde;
Thou seest all, yet none at all sees thee:
All that is by the working of thy Deitee.

So perfect in that art was Paridell, 5
That he Malbeccoes halfen eye did wyle;
His halfen eye he wiled wondrous well,
And Hellenors both eyes did eke beguyle,
Both eyes and hart attonce, during the whyle
That he there sojourned his woundes to heale;
That Cupid selfe, it seeing, close did smyle
To weet how he her love away did steale,
And bad that none their joyous treason should reveale.

The learned lover lost no time nor tyde 6
That least advantage mote to him afford,
Yet bore so faire a sayle, that none espyde
His secret drift, till he her layd aboard.
When so in open place and commune bord
He fortun'd her to meet, with commune speach
He courted her; yet bayted every word,
That his ungentle hoste n'ote him appeach
Of vile ungentlenesse, or hospitages breach.

But when apart (if ever her apart 7
He found) then his false engins fast he plyde,
And all the sleights unbosomd in his hart:
He sigh'd, he sobd, he swownd, he perdy dyde,
And cast himselfe on ground her fast besyde:
Tho, when againe he him bethought to live,
He wept, and wayld, and false laments belyde,
Saying, but if she Mercie would him give,
That he mote algates dye, yet did his death forgive.

And otherwhyles with amorous delights 8
And pleasing toyes he would her entertaine ;
Now singing sweetly to surprize her sprights,
Now making layes of love and lovers paine,
Bransles, Ballads, virelayes, and verses vaine ;
Oft purposes, oft riddles, he devysd,
And thousands like which flowed in his braine,
With which he fed her fancy, and entysd
To take with his new love, and leave her old despysd.

And every where he might, and everie while, 9
He did her service dewtifull, and sewd
At hand with humble pride and pleasing guile ;
So closely yet, that none but she it vewd,
Who well perceived all, and all indewd.
Thus finely did he his false nets dispred,
With which he many weake harts had subdewd
Of yore, and many had ylike misled :
What wonder then, if she were likewise carried ?

No fort so fensible, no wals so strong, 10
But that continuall battery will rive,
Or daily siege, through dispurvayaunce long
And lacke of reskewes, will to parley drive ;
And Peece, that unto parley eare will give,
Will shortly yield it selfe, and will be made
The vassall of the victors will bylive :
That stratageme had oftentimes assayd
This crafty Paramoure, and now it plaine display'd :

For through his traines he her intrapped hath, 11
That she her love and hart hath wholly sold
To him, without regard of gaine or scath,
Or care of credite, or of husband old,
Whom she hath vow'd to dub a fayre Cucquold.
Nought wants but time and place, which shortly shee
Devized hath, and to her lover told.
It pleased well : So well they both agree :
So readie rype to ill ill wemens counsels bee !

Darke was the Evening, fit for lovers stealth, 12
When chaunst Malbecco busie be elsewhere,
She to his closet went, where all his wealth
Lay hid; thereof she countlesse summes did reare,
The which she meant away with her to beare;
The rest she fyr'd, for sport, or for despight:
As Hellene, when she saw aloft appeare
The Trojane flames and reach to hevens hight,
Did clap her hands, and joyed at that dolefull sight.

This second Helene, fayre Dame Hellenore, 13
The whiles her husband ran with sory haste
To quench the flames which she had tyn'd before,
Laught at his foolish labour spent in waste,
And ran into her lovers armes right fast;
Where streight embraced she to him did cry
And call alowd for helpe, ere helpe were past;
For lo! that Guest did beare her forcibly,
And meant to ravish her, that rather had to dy.

The wretched man hearing her call for ayd, 14
And ready seeing him with her to fly,
In his disquiet mind was much dismayd:
But when againe he backward cast his eye,
And saw the wicked fire so furiously
Consume his hart, and scorch his Idoles face,
He was therewith distressed diversely,
Ne wist he how to turne, nor to what place:
Was never wretched man in such a wofull cace.

Ay when to him she cryde, to her he turnd, 15
And left the fire; love money overcame:
But, when he marked how his money burnd,
He left his wife; money did love disclame:
Both was he loth to loose his loved Dame,
And loth to leave his liefest pelfe behinde;
Yet, sith he n'ote save both, he sav'd that same
Which was the dearest to his dounhill minde,
The God of his desire, the joy of misers blinde.

Thus whilst all things in troublous uprore were, 16
And all men busie to suppress the flame,
The loving couple neede no reskew feare,
But leasure had and liberty to frame
Their purpost flight, free from all mens reclame;
And Night, the patronesse of love-stealth fayre,
Gave them safe conduct, till to end they came.
So beene they gone yfere, a wanton payre
Of lovers loosely knit, where list them to repayre.

Soone as the cruell flames yslaked were, 17
Malbecco, seeing how his losse did lye,
Out of the flames which he had quencht whylere,
Into huge waves of grieve and gealosye
Full deepe emplonged was, and drowned nye
Twixt inward doole and felonous despight:
He rav'd, he wept, he stamp't, he lowd did cry,
And all the passions that in man may light
Did him attonce oppresse, and vex his caytive spright.

Long thus he chawd the cud of inward grieve, 18
And did consume his gall with anguish sore:
Still when he mused on his late mischiefe,
So still the smart thereof increased more,
And seemd more grievous then it was before.
At last when sorrow he saw bootied nought,
Ne grieve might not his love to him restore,
He gan devise how her he reskew mought:
Ten thousand wayes he cast in his confused thought.

At last resolving, like a Pilgrim pore, 19
To search her forth where so she might be fond,
And bearing with him treasure in close store,
The rest he leaves in ground: So takes in hond
To seeke her endlong both by sea and lond.
Long he her sought, he sought her far and nere,
And every where that he mote understand
Of knights and ladies any meetings were;
And of eachone he mett he tidings did inquire.

But all in vaine : his woman was too wise 20
Ever to come into his clouch againe,
And hee too simple ever to surprise
The jolly Paridell, for all his paine.
One day, as hee forpassed by the plaine
With weary pace, he far away espide
A couple, seeming well to be his twaine,
Which hoved close under a forest side,
As if they lay in wait, or els them selves did hide.

Well weened hee that those the same mote bee ; 21
And as he better did their shape avize,
Him seemed more their maner did agree ;
For th' one was armed all in warlike wize,
Whom to be Paridell he did devize ;
And th' other, al yclad in garments light
Discolour'd like to womanish disguise,
He did resemble to his lady bright ;
And ever his faint hart much earned at the sight :

And ever faine he towards them would goe, 22
But yet durst not for dread approchen nie,
But stood aloofe, unweeting what to doe ;
Till that prick't forth with loves extremity,
That is the father of fowle gealosy,
He closely nearer crept the truth to weet :
But, as he nigher drew, he easily
Might scerne that it was not his sweetest sweet,
Ne yet her Belamour, the partner of his sheet :

But it was scornefull Braggadochio, 23
That with his servant Trompart hoverd there,
Sith late he fled from his too earnest foe :
Whom such whenas Malbecco spyed clere,
He turned backe, and would have fled arere,
Till Trompart, ronning hastely, him did stay,
And bad before his sovaine Lord appere.
That was him loth, yet durst he not gainesay,
And comming him before low louted on the lay

The Boaster at him sternely bent his browe, 24
As if he could have kild him with his looke,
That to the ground him meekely made to bowe,
And awfull terror deepe into him strooke,
That every member of his body quooke.
Said he, "Thou man of nought, what doest thou here
Unfitly furnisht with thy bag and booke,
Where I expected one with shield and spere
To prove some deeds of armes upon an equall pere?"

The wretched man at his imperious speach 25
Was all abasht, and low prostrating said :
" Good Sir, let not my rudenes be no breach
Unto your patience, ne be ill ypaid ;
For I unwares this way by fortune straid,
A silly Pilgrim driven to distresse,
That seeke a Lady"—There he suddein staid,
And did the rest with grievous sighes suppressse,
While teares stood in his eies, few drops of bitternesse.

"What Lady, man?" (said Trompart) "take good hart,
And tell thy griefe, if any hidden lye :
Was never better time to shew thy smart
Then now that noble succor is thee by,
That is the whole worlds commune remedy."
That chearful word his weak heart much did cheare,
And with vaine hope his spirits faint supply,
That bold he sayd ; " O most redoubted Pere !
Vouchsafe with mild regard a wretches cace to heare."

Then sighing sore, " It is not long," (saide hee) 27
" Sith I enjoyd the gentlest Dame alive ;
Of whom a knight, no knight at all perdee,
But shame of all that doe for honor strive,
By treacherous deceit did me deprive :
Through open outrage he her bore away,
And with fowle force unto his will did drive ;
Which al good knights, that armes do bear this day,
Are bownd for to revenge, and punish if they may.

“And you, most noble Lord, that can and dare 28
Redresse the wrong of miserable wight,
Cannot employ your most victorious speare
In better quarell then defence of right,
And for a Lady gainst a faithlesse knight:
So shall your glory bee aduanced much,
And all faire Ladies magnify your might,
And eke my selfe, albee I simple such,
Your worthy paineshall welreward with guerdon rich.”

With that out of his bouget forth he drew 29
Great store of treasure, therewith him to tempt;
But he on it lookt scornefully askew,
As much disdeigning to be so misdempt,
Or a war-monger to be basely nempt;
And sayd; “Thy offers base I greatly loth,
And eke thy words uncourteous and unkempt:
I tread in dust thee and thy money both, [wroth.
That, were it not for shame”—So turned from him

But Trompart, that his maistres humor knew 30
In lofty looks to hide an humble minde,
Was inly tickled with that golden vew,
And in his eare him rownded close behinde:
Yet stoupt he not, but lay still in the winde,
Waiting aduantage on the pray to sease,
Till Trompart, lowly to the grownd inclinde,
Besought him his great corage to appease,
And pardon simple man that rash did him displease.

Big looking like a doughty Doucepere, 31
At last he thus; “Thou clod of vilest clay,
I pardon yield, and with thy rudenes beare;
But weete henceforth, that all that golden pray,
And all that els the vaine world vaunten may,
I loath as dounge, ne deeme my dew reward:
Fame is my meed, and glory vertuous pray:
But minds of mortall men are muchell mard
And mov'd amisse with massy mucks unmeet regard.

"And more : I graunt to thy great misery 32
Gratious respect ; thy wife shall backe be sent :
And that vile knight, who ever that he bee,
Which hath thy lady reft and knighthood shent,
By Sanglamort my sword, whose deadly dent
The blood hath of so many thousands shedd,
I sweare, ere long shall dearely it repent ;
Ne he twixt heven and earth shall hide his hedd,
But soone he shalbe fownd, and shortly doen be dedd."

The foolish man thereat woxe wondrous blith, 33
As if the word so spoken were halfe donne,
And humbly thanked him a thousand sith
That had from death to life him newly wonne.
Tho forth the Boaster marching brave begonne
His stolen steed to thunder furiously,
As if he heaven and hell would over-ronne,
And all the world confound with cruelty ;
That much Malbecco joyed in his jollity.

Thus long they three together traveiled, 34
Through many a wood and many an uncouth way,
To seeke his wife that was far wandered :
But those two sought nought but the present pray,
To weete, the treasure which he did bewray,
On which their eies and harts were wholly sett,
With purpose how they might it best betray ;
For, sith the howre that first he did them lett
The same behold, therwith their keene desires were
whett.

It fortun'd, as they together far'd, 35
They spide where Paridell came pricking fast
Upon the plaine ; the which him selfe prepar'd
To giust with that brave straunger knight a cast,
As on adventure by the way he past.
Alone he rode without his Paragone ;
For, having filcht her bells, her up he cast
To the wide world, and lett her fly alone :
He nould be clogd. So had he served many one.

The gentle Lady, loose at randon lefte, 36
The greene-wood long did walke, and wander wide
At wilde adventure, like a forlorne wefte;
Till on a day the Satyres her espide
Straying alone withouten groome or guide:
Her up they tooke, and with them home her ledd,
With them as housewife ever to abide,
To milk their gotes, and make them cheese and bredd;
And every one as commune good her handeled:

That shortly she Malbecco has forgott, 37
And eke Sir Paridell, all were he deare;
Who from her went to seeke another lott,
And now by fortune was arrived here,
Where those two guilers with Malbecco were.
Soone as the old man saw Sir Paridell,
He fainted, and was almost dead with feare,
Ne word he had to speake his grieve to tell,
But to him louted low, and greeted goodly well;

And, after, asked him for Hellenore: 38
"I take no keepe of her," (sayd Paridell)
"She wonneth in the forrest there before."
So forth he rode as his adventure fell;
The whiles the Boaster from his loftie sell
Faynd to alight, something amisse to mend;
But the fresh Swayne would not his leasure dwell,
But went his way: whom when he passed kend,
He up remounted light, and after faind to wend.

"Perdy, nay," (said Malbecco) "shall ye not; 39
But let him passe as lightly as he came:
For litle good of him is to be got,
And mickle perill to bee put to shame.
But let us goe to seeke my dearest Dame,
Whom he hath left in yonder forest wyld;
For of her safety in great doubt I ame,
Least salvage beastes her person have despoild:
Then all the world is lost, and we in vaine have toyl'd.

They all agree, and forward them adrest : 40
"Ah! but," (said crafty Trompart) "weete ye well,
That yonder in that wastefull wilderness
Huge monsters haunt, and many dangers dwell;
Dragons, and Minotaures, and feendes of hell,
And many wilde woodmen which robbe and rend
All traveilers: therefore advise ye well,
Before ye enterprise that way to wend.
One may his journey bring too soone to evill end."

Malbecco stopt in great astonishment, 41
And with pale eyes fast fixed on the rest,
Their counsell crav'd in daunger imminent.
Said Trompart; "You, that are the most opprest
With burdein of great treasure, I thinke best
Here for to stay in safetie behynd:
My Lord and I will search the wide forest."
That counsell pleased not Malbeccoes mynd,
For he was much afraid him selfe alone to fynd.

"Then is it best," (said he) "that ye doe leave 42
Your treasure here in some security,
Either fast closed in some hollow greave,
Or buried in the ground from jeopardy,
Till we retorne againe in safety:
As for us two, least doubt of us ye have,
Hence farre away we will blyndfolded ly,
Ne privy bee unto your treasures grave." [brave.
It pleased; so he did. Then they march forward

Now, when amid the thickest woodes they were, 43
They heard a noyse of many bagpipes shrill,
And shrieking Hububs them approching nere,
Which all the forest did with horreur fill.
That dreadfull sound the bosters hart did thrill
With such amazment, that in hast he fledd,
Ne ever looked back for good or ill;
And after him eke fearefull Trompart spedd:
The old man could not fly, but fell to ground half
dedd.

Yet afterwarde, close creeping as he might, 44
He in a bush did hyde his fearefull hedd.
The jolly Satyres, full of fresh delight,
Came dauncing forth, and with them nimbly ledd
Faire Helenore with girlonds all bespredd,
Whom their May-lady they had newly made :
She, proude of that new honour which they redd,
And of their lovely fellowship full glade,
Daunst lively, and her face did with a Lawrell shade.

The silly man that in the thickett lay 45
Saw all this goodly sport, and grieved sore ;
Yet durst he not against it doe or say,
But did his hart with bitter thoughts engore,
To see th' unkindnes of his Hellenore.
All day they daunced with great lusty hedd,
And with their horned feet the greene gras wore,
The whiles their Gotes upon the brouzes fedd,
Till drouping Phæbus gan to hyde his golden hedd.

Tho up they gan their mery pypes to trusse, 46
And all their goodly hearde did gather rownd ;
But every Satyre first did give a busse
To Hellenore ; so busses did abound.
Now gan the humid vapour shed the grownd
With perly deaw, and th' Earthes gloomy shade
Did dim the brightnesse of the welkin rownd,
That every bird and beast awarned made [invade.
To shrowd themselves, whiles sleepe their sences did

Which when Malbecco saw, out of his bush 47
Upon his handes and feete he crept full light,
And like a Gote emongst the Gotes did rush ;
That, through the helpe of his faire hornes on hight,
And misty dampe of misconceyving night,
And eke through likenesse of his gotish beard,
He did the better counterfeite aright :
So home he marcht emongst the horned heard,
That none of all the Satyres him espyde or heard.

At night, when all they went to sleepe, he vewd 48
Whereas his lovely wife emongst them lay,
Embraced of a Satyre rough and rude,
Who all the night did minde his joyous play:
Nine times he heard him come aloft ere day,
That all his hart with gealosy did swell;
But yet that nights ensample did bewray
That not for nought his wife them loved so well,
When one so oft a night did ring his matins bell.

So closely as he could he to them crept, 49
When wearie of their sport to sleepe they fell,
And to his wife, that now full soundly slept,
He whispered in her eare, and did her tell,
That it was he which by her side did dwell;
And therefore prayd her wake to heare him plaine.
As one out of a dreame not waked well
She turnd her, and returned backe againe;
Yet her for to awake he did the more constraine.

At last with irkesom trouble she abrayd; 50
And then perceiving, that it was indeed
Her old Malbecco, which did her upbrayd
With loosenesse of her love and loathly deed,
She was astonisht with exceeding dreed,
And would have wakt the Satyre by her syde;
But he her prayd, for mercy or for meed,
To save his life, ne let him be descryde,
But hearken to his lore, and all his counsell hyde.

Tho gan he her perswade to leave that lewd 51
And loathsom life, of God and man abhord,
And home returne, where all should be renewd
With perfect peace and bandes of fresh accord,
And she receivd againe to bed and bord,
As if no trespass ever had beene donne:
But she it all refused at one word,
And by no meanes would to his will be wonne,
But chose emongst the jolly Satyres still to wonne.

He wooed her till day spring he espyde, 52
But all in vaine; and then turnd to the heard,
Who butted him with hornes on every syde,
And trode downe in the durt, where his hore beard
Was fowly dight, and he of death afeard.
Early, before the heavens fairest light
Out of the ruddy East was fully reard,
The heardees out of their foldes were loosed quight,
And he emongst the rest crept forth in sory plight.

So soone as he the Prison dore did pas, 53
He ran as fast as both his feet could beare,
And never looked who behind him was,
Ne scarsely who before: like as a Beare,
That creeping close amongst the hives to reare
An hony-combe, the wakefull dogs espy,
And him assayling sore his carkas teare,
That hardly he with life away does fly,
Ne stayes, till safe him selfe he see from jeopardy.

Ne stayd he, till he came unto the place 54
Where late his treasure he entombed had;
Where when he found it not, (for Trompart bace
Had it purloyned for his maister bad)
With extreme fury he became quite mad,
And ran away, ran with him selfe away;
That who so straungely had him seene bestadd,
With upstart haire and staring eyes dismay,
From Limbo lake him late escaped sure would say.

High over hilles and over dales he fledd, 55
As if the wind him on his winges had borne;
Ne banck nor bush could stay him, when he spedd
His nimble feet, as treading still on thorne:
Griefe, and despight, and gealosy, and scorne,
Did all the way him follow hard behynd;
And he himselfe himselfe loath'd so forlorne,
So shamefully forlorne of womankynd,
That, as a Snake, still lurked in his wounded mynd.

Still fled he forward, looking backward still; 56
Ne stayd his flight nor fearefull agony,
Till that he came unto a rocky hill
Over the sea suspended dreadfully,
That living creature it would terrify
To looke adowne, or upward to the hight:
From thence he threw him selfe dispiteously,
All desperate of his fore-damned spright,
That seemd no help for him was left in living sight.

But through long anguish and selfe-murdring thought,
He was so wasted and forpined quight,
That all his substance was consum'd to nought,
And nothing left but like an aery Spright,
That on the rockes he fell so flit and light,
That he thereby receiv'd no hurt at all;
But chaunced on a craggy cliff to light,
Whence he with crooked clawes so long did crall,
That at the last he found a cave with entrance small.

Into the same he creepes, and thenceforth there 58
Resolv'd to build his balefull mansion
In drery darkenes and continuall feare
Of that rocks fall, which ever and anon
Threates with huge ruine him to fall upon,
That he dare never sleepe, but that one eye
Still ope he keepes for that occasion;
Ne ever rests he in tranquillity,
The roring billowes beat his bowre so boystrously.

Ne ever is he wont on ought to feed 59
But todes and frogs, his pasture poysonous,
Which in his cold complexion doe breed
A filthy blood, or humour rancorous,
Matter of doubt and dread suspitious,
That doth with curelesse care consume the hart,
Corrupts the stomacke with gall vitious,
Croscuts the liver with internall smart,
And doth transfixe the soule with deathes eternall dart.

Yet can he never dye, but dying lives, 60
And doth himselfe with sorrow new sustaine,
That death and life attonce unto him gives,
And painefull pleasure turnes to pleasing paine.
There dwels he ever, miserable swaine,
Hatefull both to him selfe and every wight;
Where he, through privy griefe and horreur vaine,
Is woxen so deform'd, that he has quight
Forgot he was a man, and Gelosy is hight.



CANTO XI.

*Britomart chaceth Ollyphant ;
findes Scudamour distrest :
Assayes the house of Busyrane,
where loves spoyles are exprest.*



HATEFULL hellish Snake! what furie furst
Brought thee from balefull house of Pro-
serpine,

Where in her bosome she thee long had nurst,
And fostred up with bitter milke of tine,
Fowle Gealosy! that turnest love divine
To joylesse dread, and mak'st the loving hart
With hatefull thoughts to languish and to pine,
And feed it selfe with selfe-consuming smart?
Of all the passions in the mind thou vilest art!

O! let him far be banished away, 2
And in his stead let Love for ever dwell;
Sweete Love, that doth his golden wings embay
In blessed Nectar and pure Pleasures well,
Untroubled of vile feare or bitter fell.
And ye, faire Ladies, that your kingdomes make
In th' harts of men, them governe wisely well,
And of faire Britomart ensample take,
That was as trew in love as Turtle to her make.

Who with Sir Satyrane, as earst ye red, 3
Forth ryding from Malbeccoes hostlesse hous,
Far off aspyde a young man, the which fled
From an huge Geaunt, that with hideous
And hatefull outrage long him chaced thus;
It was that Ollyphant, the brother deare
Of that Argante vile and vitious,
From whom the Squire of Dames was reft whylere;
This all as bad as she, and worse, if worse ought were.

For as the sister did in feminine
And filthy lust exceede all woman kinde,
So he surpassed his sex masculine
In beastly use all that I ever finde:
Whom when as Britomart beheld behinde
The fearefull boy so greedily poursew,
She was emmoued in her noble minde
T'employ her puissance to his reskew,
And pricked fiercely forward where she did him vew. 4

Ne was Sir Satyrane her far behinde,
But with like fiercenesse did ensew the chace.
Whom when the Gyaunt saw, he soone resinde
His former suit, and from them fled apace:
They after both, and boldly bad him bace,
And each did strive the other to outgoe;
But he them both outran a wondrous space,
For he was long, and swift as any Roe,
And now made better speed t' escape his feared foe. 5

It was not Satyrane, whom he did feare,
But Britomart the flowre of chastity;
For he the powre of chaste hands might not beare,
But alwayes did their dread encounter fly:
And now so fast his feet he did apply,
That he has gotten to a forrest neare,
Where he is shrowded in security.
The wood they enter, and search everie where;
They searched diversely, so both divided were.

Fayre Britomart so long him followed,
That she at last came to a fountaine sheare,
By which there lay a knight all wallowed
Upon the grassy ground, and by him neare
His haberjeon, his helmet, and his speare:
A little of his shield was rudely throwne,
On which the winged boy in colours cleare
Depeincted was, full easie to be knowne,
And he thereby, where ever it in field was showne. 7

His face upon the grownd did groveling ly, 8
As if he had beene slombring in the shade;
That the brave Mayd would not for courtesy
Out of his quiet slomber him abraide,
Nor seeme too suddeinly him to invade.
Still as she stood, she heard with grievous throb
Him grone, as if his hart were peecees made,
And with most painefull pangs to sigh and sob,
That pittie did the Virgins hart of patience rob.

At last forth breaking into bitter plaintes 9
He sayd; "O soverayne Lord! that sit'st on hye
And raingst in blis emongst thy blessed Saintes,
How suffrest thou such shamefull cruelty
So long unwreaked of thine enemy?
Or hast thou, Lord, of good mens cause no heed?
Or doth thy justice sleepe and silent ly?
What booteth then the good and righteous deed,
If goodnesse find no grace, nor righteousness no meed?"

"If good find grace, and righteousness reward, 10
Why then is Amoret in caytive band,
Sith that more bounteous creature never far'd
On foot upon the face of living land?
Or if that heavenly justice may withstand
The wrongfull outrage of unrighteous men,
Why then is Busirane with wicked hand
Suffred, these seven monethes day, in secret den
My Lady and my love so cruelly to pen!

"My Lady and my love is cruelly pend 11
In dolefull darkenes from the vew of day,
Whilest deadly torments doe her chast brest rend,
And the sharpe steele doth rive her hart in tway,
All for she Scudamore will not denay.
Yet thou, vile man, vile Scudamore, art sound,
Ne canst her ayde, ne canst her foe dismay;
Unworthy wretch to tread upon the ground;
For whom so faire a Lady feeles so sore a wound!"

There an huge heape of singulfes did oppresse 12
His struggling soule, and swelling throbs empeach
His foltring tounge with pangs of drerinesse,
Choking the remnant of his plaintife speach,
As if his dayes were come to their last reach :
Which when she heard, and saw the ghastly fit
Threatning into his life to make a breach,
Both with great ruth and terrour she was smit,
Fearing least from her cage the wearie soule would flit.

Tho stouping downe she him amoved light; 13
Who, therewith somewhat starting, up gan looke,
And seeing him behind a stranger knight,
Whereas no living creature he mistooke,
With great indignaunce he that sight forsooke,
And, downe againe himselfe disdainefully
Abjecting, th' earth with his faire forehead strooke :
Which the bold Virgin seeing gan apply
Fit medicine to his grieve, and spake thus courtesly.

" Ah gentle knight ! whose deepe conceived grieve 14
Well seemes t' excede the powre of patience,
Yet, if that heavenly grace some good reliefe
You send, submit you to high providence ;
And ever in your noble hart prepense,
That all the sorrow in the world is lesse
Then vertues might and values confidence :
For who nill bide the burden of distresse,
Must not here thinke to live ; for life is wretchednesse.

" Therefore, faire Sir, doe comfort to you take, 15
And freely read what wicked felon so
Hath outrag'd you, and thrald your gentle make.
Perhaps this hand may helpe to ease your woe,
And wreake your sorrow on your cruell foe ;
At least it faire endeavour will apply."
Those feeling words so neare the quicke did goe,
That up his head he reared easily,
And leaning on his elbowe these few words lett fly.

"What boots it plaine that cannot be redrest, 16
And sow vaine sorrow in a fruitlesse eare,
Sith powre of hand, nor skill of learned brest,
Ne worldly price, cannot redeeme my deare
Out of her thraldome and continuall feare:
For he, the tyrant, which her hath in ward
By strong enchauntments and blacke Magicke leare,
Hath in a dungeon deepe her close embard,
And many dreadfull feends hath pointed to her gard.

"There he tormenteth her most terribly, 17
And day and night afflicts with mortall paine,
Because to yield him love she doth deny,
Once to me yold, not to be yolde againe:
But yet by torture he would her constraine
Love to conceive in her disdainfull brest;
Till so she doe, she must in doole remaine,
Ne may by living meanes be thence relest:
What boots it then to plaine that cannot be redrest?"

With this sad hersall of his heavy stresse 18
The warlike Damzell was empassiond sore,
And sayd; "Sir knight, your cause is nothing lesse
Then is your sorrow certes, if not more;
For nothing so much pittie doth implore
As gentle Ladyes helplesse misery:
But yet, if please ye listen to my lore,
I will, with prooffe of last extremity,
Deliver her fro thence, or with her for you dy."

"Ah! gentlest knight alive," (sayd Scudamore) 19
What huge heroicke magnanimity [more,
Dwells in thy bounteous brest! what couldst thou
If shee were thine, and thou as now am I?
O! spare thy happy daies, and them apply
To better boot; but let me die that ought:
More is more losse; one is enough to dy."
"Life is not lost," (said she) "for which is bought
Endlesse renowm, that, more then death, is to be sought."

Thus shee at length persuaded him to rise, 20
And with her wend to see what new successe
Mote him befall upon new enterprise.
His armes, which he had vowed to disprofesse,
She gathered up and did about him dresse,
And his forwardred steed unto him gott :
So forth they both yfere make their progresse,
And march not past the mountenaunce of a shott,
Till they arriv'd whereas their purpose they did plott.

There they dismounting drew their weapons bold, 21
And stoutly came unto the Castle gate,
Whereas no gate they found them to withhold,
Nor ward to waite at morne and evening late ;
But in the Porch, that did them sore amate,
A flaming fire, ymixt with smouldry smoke
And stinking sulphure, that with griesly hate
And dreadfull horror did all entraunce choke,
Enforced them their forward footing to revoke.

Greatly thereat was Britomart dismayd, 22
Ne in that stownd wist how her selfe to beare ;
For daunger vaine it were to have assayd
That cruell element, which all things feare,
Ne none can suffer to approchen neare :
And, turning backe to Scudamour, thus sayd :
“ What monstrous enmity provoke we heare ?
Foolhardy as th' Earthes children, the which made
Batteill against the Gods, so we a God invade.

“ Daunger without discretion to attempt 23
Inglorious and beastlike is : therefore, Sir knight,
Aread what course of you is safest dempt,
And how we with our foe may come to fight.”
“ This is” (quoth he) “ the dolorous despight,
Which earst to you I playnd : for neither may
This fire be quencht by any witt or might,
Ne yet by any meanes remov'd away ;
So mighty be th' enchauntments which the same dostay.

"What is there ells but cease these fruitlesse paines,
 And leave me to my former languishing?
 Faire Amorett must dwell in wicked chaines,
 And Scudamore here die with sorrowing."
 "Perdy not so," (saide shee) "for shameful thing
 Yt were t' abandon noble chevisaunce
 For shewe of perill, without venturing:
 Rather let try extremities of chaunce,
 Then enterprised praise for dread to disavaunce."

Therewith, resolv'd to prove her utmost might, 25
 Her ample shield she threw before her face,
 And her swords point directing forward right
 Assayld the flame; the which eftesoones gave place,
 And did it selfe divide with equall space,
 That through she passed: as a thonder bolt
 Perceth the yielding ayre, and doth displace
 The soring clouds into sad showres ymolt;
 So to her yold the flames, and did their force revolt.

Whom whenas Scudamour saw past the fire 26
 Safe and untoucht, he likewise gan assay
 With greedy will and envious desire,
 And bad the stubborne flames to yield him way:
 But cruell Mulciber would not obey
 His threatfull pride, but did the more augment
 His mighty rage, and with imperious sway
 Him forst, (maulgre) his fercenes to relent,
 And backe retire, all scorcht and pittifully brent.

With huge impatience he inly swelt, 27
 More for great sorrow that he could not pas
 Then for the burning torment which he felt;
 That with fell woodnes he effierced was,
 And wilfully him throwing on the gras
 Did beat and bounse his head and brest ful sore:
 The whiles the Championesse now decked has
 The utmost rowme, and past the foremost dore;
 The utmost rowme abounding with all precious store:

For round about the walls yclothed were 28
With goodly arras of great majesty,
Woven with gold and silke, so close and nere
That the rich metall lurked privily,
As faining to be hidd from envious eye;
Yet here, and there, and every where, unwares
It shewd it selfe and shone unwillingly;
Like to a discolourd Snake, whose hidden snares
Through the greene gras his long bright burnisht back
declares.

And in those Tapets weren fashioned 29
Many faire pourtraicts, and many a faire feate;
And all of love, and al of lusty-hed,
As seemed by their semblaunt, did entreat:
And eke all Cupids warres they did repeate,
And cruell battailes, which he whilome fought
Gainst all the Gods to make his empire great;
Besides the huge massacres, which he wrought
On mighty kings and kesars into thraldome brought.

Therein was writt how often thondring Jove 30
Had felt the point of his hart percing dart,
And, leaving heavens kingdome, here did rove
In straunge disguise, to slake his scalding smart;
Now, like a Ram, faire Hellè to pervart,
Now, like a Bull, Europa to withdraw:
Ah! how the fearefull Ladies tender hart
Did lively seeme to tremble, when she saw
The huge seas under her t' obay her servaunts law.

Soone after that, into a golden showre 31
Him selfe he chaung'd, faire Danaë to vew;
And through the rooffe of her strong brasen towre
Did raine into her lap an hony dew;
The whiles her foolish garde, that litle knew
Of such deceit, kept th' yron dore fast bard,
And watcht that none should enter nor issew:
Vaine was the watch, and bootlesse all the ward,
Whenas the God to golden hew himselfe transfard.

Then was he turnd into a snowy Swan, 32
To win faire Leda to his lovely trade :
O wondrous skill ! and sweet wit of the man,
That her in daffadillies sleeping made
From scorching heat her daintie limbes to shade ;
Whiles the proud Bird, ruffing his fethers wyde
And brushing his faire brest, did her invade :
She slept ; yet twixt her eielids closely spyde
How towards her he rusht, and smiled at his pryde.

Then shewd it how the Thebane Semelee, 33
Deceivd of gealous Juno, did require
To see him in his soverayne majestee
Armd with his thunderbolts and lightning fire,
Whens dearly she with death bought her desire.
But faire Alcmena better match did make,
Joying his love in likenes more entire
Three nights in one, they say, that for her sake
He then did put, her pleasures lenger to partake.

Twise was he seene in soaring Eagles shape, 34
And with wide winges to beat the buxome ayre :
Once, when he with Asterie did scape ;
Againe, when as the Trojane boy so fayre
He snatcht from Ida hill, and with him bare :
Wondrous delight it was there to behould
How the rude Shepheards after him did stare,
Trembling through feare least down he fallen should,
And often to him calling to take surer hould.

In Satyres shape Antiopa he snatcht ; 35
And like a fire, when he Aegin' assayd :
A shepeheard, when Mnemosyne he catcht ;
And like a Serpent to the Thracian mayd. [playd,
Whyles thus on earth great Jove these pageaunts
The winged boy did thrust into his throne,
And scoffing thus unto his mother sayd :
" Lo ! now the heavens obey to me alone, [gone."
And take me for their Jove, whiles Jove to earth is

And thou, faire Phœbus, in thy colours bright 36
Wast there enwoven, and the sad distresse
In which that boy thee plunged, for despight
That thou bewray'dst his mothers wantonnesse,
When she with Mars was meynt in joyfulnesse:
For thy he thrild thee with a leaden dart
To love fair Daphne, which the[e] loved lesse;
Lesse shee thee lov'd then was thy just desart,
Yet was thy love her death, and her death was thy smart.

So lovedst thou the lusty Hyacinth; 37
So lovedst thou the faire Coronis deare;
Yet both are of thy haplesse hand extinct,
Yet both in flowres doe live, and love thee beare,
The one a Pounce, the other a sweet breare:
For grieve whereof, ye mote have lively seene
The God himselfe rending his golden heare,
And breaking quite his garland ever greene,
With other signes of sorrow and impatient teene.

Both for those two, and for his owne deare sonne, 38
The sonne of Climene, he did repent;
Who, bold to guide the charet of the Sunne,
Himselfe in thousand peeces fondly rent,
And all the world with flashing fire brent;
So like, that all the walles did seeme to flame:
Yet cruell Cupid, not herewith content,
Forst him eftsoones to follow other game,
And love a Shephards daughter for his dearest Dame.

He loved Isse for his dearest Dame, 39
And for her sake her cattell fedd a while,
And for her sake a cowheard vile became:
The servant of Admetus, cowheard vile,
Whiles that from heaven he suffered exile.
Long were to tell his other lovely fitt;
Now, like a Lyon hunting after spoile;
Now, like a stag; now, like a faulcon flit:
All which in that faire arras was most lively writ.

Next unto him was Neptune pictured, 40
In his divine resemblance wondrous lyke :
His face was rugged, and his hoarie hed
Dropped with brackish deaw : his threeforkt Pyke
He stearnly shooke, and therewith fierce did stryke
The raging billowes, that on every syde
They trembling stood, and made a long broad dyke,
That his swift charet might have passage wyde
Which foure great Hippodames did draw in temewise
tyde.

His seahorses did seeme to snort amayne, 41
And from their nosethrilles blow the brynie streame,
That made the sparckling waves to smoke agayne,
And flame with gold ; but the white fomy creame
Did shine with silver, and shoot forth his beame.
The God himselfe did pensive seeme and sad,
And hong adowne his head as he did dreame ;
For privy love his brest empierced had,
Ne ought but deare Bisaltis ay could make him glad

He loved eke Iphimedia deare, 42
And Aeolus faire daughter, Arne hight,
For whom he turnd him selfe into a Steare,
And fedd on fodder to beguile her sight.
Also to win Deucalions daughter bright,
He turnd him selfe into a Dolphin fayre ;
And like a winged horse he tooke his flight
To snaky-locke Medusa to repayre,
On whom he got faire Pegasus that flitteth in the ayre.

Next Saturne was, (but who would ever weene 43
That sullein Saturne ever weend to love ?
Yet love is sullein, and Saturnlike seene,
As he did for Erigone it prove)
That to a Centaure did him selfe transmove.
So proov'd it eke that gracious God of wine,
When for to compasse Philliras hard love,
He turnd himselfe into a fruitfull vine,
And into her faire bosome made his grapes decline.

Long were to tell the amorous assayes, 44
And gentle pangues, with which he maked meeke
The mightie Mars, to learne his wanton playes;
How oft for Venus, and how often eek
For many other Nymphes, he sore did shreek;
With womanish teares, and with unwarlike smarts,
Privily moystening his horrid cheeke:
There was he painted full of burning dartes,
And many wide woundes launched through his inner
partes.

Ne did he spare (so cruell was the Elfe) 45
His owne deare mother, (ah! why should he so?)
Ne did he spare sometime to pricke himselfe,
That he might taste the sweet consuming woe,
Which he had wrought to many others moe.
But, to declare the mournfull Tragedyes
And spoiles wherewith he all the ground did strow,
More eath to number with how many eyes
High heven beholdes sad lovers nightly theeveryes.

Kings, Queenes, Lords, Ladies, knights, and Damsels
Were heap'd together with the vulgar sort, [gent
And mingled with the raskall rabblement,
Without respect of person or of port,
To shew Dan Cupids powre and great effort:
And round about a border was entrayld
Of broken bowes and arrowes shivered short;
And a long bloody river through them rayld,
So lively and so like that living sence it fayld.

And at the upper end of that faire rowme 47
There was an Altar built of pretious stone
Of passing valew and of great renowme,
On which there stood an Image all alone
Of massy gold, which with his owne light shone;
And wings it had with sondry colours dight
More sondry colours then the proud Pavone
Beares in his boasted fan, or Iris bright, [bright.
When her discoloured bow she spreads through heven

Blyndfold he was; and in his cruell fist 48
A mortall bow and arrowes keene did hold,
With which he shot at randon, when him list,
Some headed with sad lead, some with pure gold;
(Ah man! beware how thou those dartes behold.)
A wounded Dragon under him did ly,
Whose hideous tayle his lefte foot did enfold,
And with a shaft was shot through either eye,
That no man forth might draw, ne no man remedye.

And underneath his feet was written thus, 49
Unto the Victor of the Gods this bee:
And all the people in that ample hous
Did to that image bowe their humble knee,
And oft committed fowle Idolatree.
That wondrous sight faire Britomart amazd,
Ne seeing could her wonder satisfie,
But ever more and more upon it gazd,
The whiles the passing brightnes her fraile sences dazd.

Tho, as she backward cast her busie eye 50
To search each secrete of that goodly sted,
Over the dore thus written she did spye,
Bee bold: she oft and oft it over-red,
Yet could not find what sence it figured:
But what so were therein or writ or ment,
She was no whit thereby discouraged
From prosecuting of her first intent,
But forward with bold steps into the next roome went.

Much fayrer then the former was that roome, 51
And richlier by many partes arayd;
For not with arras made in painefull loome,
But with pure gold it all was overlayd, [playd
Wrought with wilde Antickes, which their follies
In the rich metall as they living were.
A thousand monstrous formes therein were made,
Such as false love doth oft upon him weare;
For love in thousand monstrous formes doth oft appeare.

And all about the glistring walles were hong 52
 With warlike spoiles and with victorious prayes
 Of mightie Conquerours and Captaines strong,
 Which were whilome captived in their dayes
 To cruell love, and wrought their owne decayes.
 Their swerds and speres were broke, and hauberques
 rent,

And their proud girlonds of tryumphant bayes
 Troden in dust with fury insolent,
 To shew the victors might and mercilesse intent.

The warlike Mayd, beholding earnestly 53
 The goodly ordinaunce of this rich Place,
 Did greatly wonder; ne could satisfy
 Her greedy eyes with gazing a long space:
 But more she mervaild that no footings trace
 Nor wight appeard, but wastefull emptinesse
 And solemne silence over all that place:

Straunge thing it seem'd, that none was to possesse
 So rich purveyaunce, ne them keepe with carefulnesse.

And, as she lookt about, she did behold 54
 How over that same dore was likewise writ,
Be bolde, be bolde, and every where, *Be bold*;
 That much she muz'd, yet could not construe it
 By any ridling skill, or commune wit.
 At last she spyde at that rowmes upper end
 Another yron dore, on which was writ,
Be not too bold; whereto though she did bend
 Her earnest minde, yet wist not what it might intend.

Thus she there wayted untill eventyde, 55
 Yet living creature none she saw appeare.
 And now sad shadowes gan the world to hyde
 From mortall vew, and wrap in darkenes dreare;
 Yet nould she d'off her weary armes, for feare
 Of secret daunger, ne let sleepe oppresse
 Her heavy eyes with natures burdein deare,
 But drew her selfe aside in sickernesse,
 And her welpointed wepons did about her dresse.

CANTO XII.

*The maske of Cupid, and th' enchanted
Chamber are displayd;
Whence Britomart redeemes faire
Amoret through charmes decayd.*

HO, when as chearelesse Night ycovered had
Fayre heaven with an universall clowd,
That every wight dismayd with darkenes sad
In silence and in sleepe themselves did shrowd,
She heard a shrilling Trompet sound alowd,
Signe of nigh battaill, or got victory :
Nought therewith daunted was her courage prowde,
But rather stird to cruell enmity,
Expecting ever when some foe she might descry.

With that an hideous storme of winde arose, 2
With dreadfull thunder and lightning atwixt,
And an earthquake, as if it streight would lose
The worlds foundations from his centre fixt :
A direfull stench of smoke and sulphure mixt
Ensewd, whose noyaunce fild the fearefull sted
From the fourth howre of night untill the sixt ;
Yet the bold Britonesse was nought ydred,
Though much emmov'd, but stedfast still persevered.

All suddeinly a stormy whirlwind blew 3
Throughout the house, that clapped every dore,
With which that yron wicket open flew,
As it with mighty levers had bene tore ;
And forth yssewd, as on the readie flore
Of some Theatre, a grave personage
That in his hand a braunch of laurell bore,
With comely haveour and count'nance sage,
Yclad in costly garments fit for tragicke Stage.

Proceeding to the midst he stil did stand, 4
As if in minde he somewhat had to say;
And to the vulgare beckning with his hand,
In signe of silence, as to heare a play,
By lively actions he gan bewray
Some argument of matter passioned:
Which doen, he backe retyred soft away,
And, passing by, his name discovered,
Ease, on his robe in golden letters cyphered.

The noble Mayd still standing all this vewd, 5
And merveld at his straunge intendment.
With that a joyous fellowship issewd
Of Minstrales making goodly meriment;
With wanton Bardes, and Rymer's impudent;
All which together song full chearefully
A lay of loves delight with sweet concent:
After whom marcht a jolly company,
In manner of a maske, enranged orderly.

The whiles a most delitious harmony 6
In full straunge notes was sweetly heard to sound,
That the rare sweetnesse of the melody
The feeble sences wholly did confound,
And the frayle soule in deepe delight nigh drownd:
And, when it ceast, shrill trompets lowd did bray,
That their report did far away rebound;
And, when they ceast, it gan againe to play,
The whiles the maskers marched forth in trim aray.

The first was Fansy, like a lovely Boy 7
Of rare aspect, and beautie without peare,
Matchable ether to that ympe of Troy,
Whom Jove did love and chose his cup to beare;
Or that same daintie lad, which was so deare
To great Alcides, that, when as he dyde
He wailed womanlike with many a teare,
And every wood and every valley wyde [cryde.
He filld with Hylas name; the Nymphes eke Hylas

His garment nether was of silke nor say, 8
But paynted plumes in goodly order dight,
Like as the sunburnt Indians do aray
Their tawney bodies in their proudest plight :
As those same plumes so seemd he vaine and light,
That by his gate might easily appeare ;
For still he far'd as dauncing in delight,
And in his hand a windy fan did beare,
That in the ydle ayre he mov'd still here and theare.

And him beside marcht amorous Desyre, 9
Whe seemd of ryper yeares then th' other Swayne,
Yet was that other swayne this elders syre,
And gave him being, commune to them twayne :
His garment was disguysed very vayne,
And his embrodered Bonet sat awry :
Twixt both his hands few sparks he close did strayne,
Which still he blew and kindled busily,
That soone they life conceiv'd, and forth in flames did fly.

Next after him went Doubt, who was yclad 10
In a discolour'd cote of straunge disguyse,
That at his backe a brode Capuccio had,
And sleeves dependaunt Albanese-wyse :
He lookt askew with his mistrustfull eyes,
And nycely trode, as thornes lay in his way,
Or that the flore to shrinke he did avyse ;
And on a broken reed he still did stay [lay.
His feeble steps, which shrunck when hard thereon he

With him went Daunger, cloth'd in ragged weed 11
Made of Beares skin, that him more dreadfull made ;
Yet his owne face was dreadfull, ne did need
Straunge horror to deforme his griesly shade :
A net in th' one hand, and a rusty blade
In th' other was ; this Mischiefe, that Mishap :
With th' one his foes he threatned to invade,
With th' other he his friends ment to enwrap ;
For whom he could not kill he practizd to entrap.

Next him was Feare, all arm'd from top to toe, 12
Yet thought himselfe not safe enough thereby,
But feard each shadow moving too or froe ;
And, his owne armes when glittering he did spy
Or clashing heard, he fast away did fly ;
As ashes pale of hew, and winged heeld,
And evermore on Daunger fixt his eye,
Gainst whom he alwayes bent a brasen shield,
Which his right hand unarmed fearefully did wield.

With him went Hope in rancke, a handsome Mayd, 13
Of chearefull looke and lovely to behold :
In silken samite she was light arayd,
And her fayre lockes were woven up in gold :
She alway smyld, and in her hand did hold
An holy water Sprinckle, dipt in deowe,
With which she sprinckled favours manifold
On whom she list, and did great liking sheowe,
Great liking unto many, but true love to feowe.

And after them Dissemblaunce and Suspect 14
Marcht in one rancke, yet an unequall paire ;
For she was gentle and of milde aspect,
Courteous to all and seeming debonaire,
Goodly adorned and exceeding faire :
Yet was that all but paynted and pourloynd, [haire ;
And her bright browes were deckt with borrowed
Her deeds were forged, and her words false coynd,
And alwaies in her hand two clewes of silke she twynd.

But he was fowle, ill favoured, and grim, 15
Under his eiebrowes looking still askaunce ;
And ever, as Dissemblaunce laught on him,
He lowrd on her with dangerous eyeglaunce,
Shewing his nature in his countenaunce :
His rolling eies did never rest in place,
But walkte each where for feare of hid mischaunce,
Holding a lattis still before his face,
Through which he stil did peep as forward he did pace.

Next him went Griefe and Fury, matcht yfere; 16
Griefe all in sable sorrowfully clad,
Downe hanging his dull head with heavy chere,
Yet inly being more then seeming sad :
A paire of Pincers in his hand he had,
With which he pinched people to the hart,
That from thenceforth a wretched life they ladd,
In wilfull languor and consuming smart,
Dying each day with inward wounds of dolours dart.

But Fury was full ill appareiled 17
In rags, that naked nigh she did appeare,
With ghastly looks and dreadfull drierihed ;
And from her backe her garments she did teare,
And from her head ofte rente her snarled heare :
In her right hand a firebrand shee did tosse
About her head, still roming here and there ;
As a dismayed Deare in chace embost,
Forgetfull of his safety, hath his right way lost

After them went Displeasure and Pleasaunce, 18
He looking lompish and full sullein sad,
And hanging downe his heavy countenaunce ;
She chearfull, fresh, and full of joyaunce glad,
As if no sorrow she ne felt ne dread ;
That evill matched paire they seemd to bee :
An angry Waspe th' one in a viall had,
Th' other in hers an hony-lady Bee.
Thus marched these six couples forth in faire degree.

After all these there marcht a most faire Dame, 19
Led of two grysie Villeins, th' one Despight,
The other cleped Cruelty by name :
She, dolefull Lady, like a dreary Spright
Cald by strong charmes out of eternall night,
Had Deathes owne ymage figurd in her face,
Full of sad signes, fearfull to living sight ;
Yet in that horror shewd a seemely grace,
And with her feeble feete did move a comely pace.

Her brest all naked, as nett yvory 20
Without adorne of gold or silver bright,
Wherewith the Craftesman wonts it beautify,
Of her dew honour was despoyled quight ;
And a wide wound therein (O ruefull sight !)
Entrenched deep with knyfe accursed keene,
Yet freshly bleeding forth her fainting spright,
(The worke of cruell hand) was to be seene,
That dyde in sanguine red her skin all snowy cleene.

At that wide orifice her trembling hart 21
Was drawne forth, and in silver basin layd,
Quite through transfixed with a deadly dart,
And in her blood yet steeming fresh embayd :
And those two villeins, which her steps upstayd,
When her weake feete could scarcely her sustaine,
And fading vitall powres gan to fade,
Her forward still with torture did constraîne,
And evermore encreased her consuming paine.

Next after her, the winged God him selfe 22
Came riding on a Lion ravenous,
Taught to obey the menage of that Elfe
That man and beast with powre imperious
Subdeweth to his kingdome tyrannous.
His blindfold eies he bad a while unbinde,
That his proud spoile of that same dolorous
Faire Dame he might behold in perfect kinde ;
Which seene, he much rejoyced in his cruell minde.

Of which ful prowd, him selfe up rearing hye 23
He looked round about with sterne disdayne,
And did surway his goodly company ;
And marshalling the evill ordered trayne,
With that the darts which his right hand did straine
Full dreadfully he shooke, that all did quake,
And clapt on hye his coulourd winges twaine,
That all his many it affraide did make :
Tho, blinding him againe, his way he forth did take.

Behinde him was Reproch, Repentaunce, Shame ; 24
Reproch the first, Shame next, Repent behinde :
Repentaunce feeble, sorrowfull, and lame ;
Reproch despightful, carelesse, and unkinde ;
Shame most ill favourd, bestiall, and blinde :
Shamelowrd, Repentauncesighd, Reproch didscould ;
Reproch sharpestings, Repentaunce whips entwinde,
Shame burning brond-yrons in her hand did hold :
All three to each unlike, yet all made in one mould.

And after them a rude confused rout 25
Of persons flockt, whose names is hard to read :
Emongst them was sterne Strife, and Anger stout ;
Unquiet Care, and fond Unthriftyhead ;
Lewd Losse of Time, and Sorrow seeming dead ;
Inconstant Chaunge, and false Disloyalty ;
Consuming Riotise, and guilty Dread
Of heavenly vengeance ; faint Infirmitie ;
Vile Poverty ; and, lastly, Death with infamy.

There were full many moe like maladies, 26
Whose names and natures I note readen well ;
So many moe, as there be phantasies
In wavering wemens witt, that none can tell,
Or paines in love, or punishments in hell :
All which disguised marcht in masking wise
About the chamber by the Damozell ;
And then returned, having marched thrise,
Into the inner rowme from whence they first did rise.

So soone as they were in, the dore streightway 27
Fast locked, driven with that stormy blast
Which first it opened, and bore all away.
Then the brave Maid, which al this while was plast
In secret shade, and saw both first and last,
Issewed forth, and went unto the dore
To enter in, but fownd it locked fast :
In vaine she thought with rigorous uprore
For to efforce, when charmes had closed it afore.

Where force might not availe, there sleights and art 28
She cast to use, both fitt for hard emprize :
For thy from that same rowme not to depart
Till morrow next shee did her selfe avize,
When that same Maske againe should forth arize.
The morrowe next appeard with joyous cheare,
Calling men to their daily exercize :
Then she, as morrow fresh, her selfe did reare
Out of her secret stand that day for to outweare.

All that day she outwore in wandering 29
And gazing on that Chambers ornament,
Till that againe the second evening
Her covered with her sable vestiment,
Wherewith the worlds faire beautie she hath blent :
Then, when the second watch was almost past,
That brasen dore flew open, and in went
Bold Britomart, as she had late forecast,
Nether of ydle showes, nor of false charmes aghast.

So soone as she was entred, rownd about 30
Shee cast her eies to see what was become
Of all those persons which she saw without :
But lo ! they streight were vanisht all and some ;
Ne living wight she saw in all that roome,
Save that same woefull Lady, both whose hands
Were bounden fast, that did her ill become,
And her small waste girt rownd with yron bands
Unto a brasen pillour, by the which she stands.

And her before the vile Enchaunter sate, 31
Figuring straunge characters of his art :
With living blood he those characters wrate,
Dreadfully dropping from her dying hart,
Seeming transfixed with a cruell dart ;
And all perforce to make her him to love.
Ah ! who can love the worker of her smart ?
A thousand charmes he formerly did prove,
Yet thousand charmes could not her stedfast hart
remove.

Soon as that virgin knight he saw in place,
 His wicked bookes in hast he overthrew,
 Not caring his long labours to deface ;
 And fiercely running to that Lady trew,
 A murtherous knife out of his pocket drew,
 The which he thought, for villenous despight,
 In her tormented bodie to embrew :
 But the stout Damzell, to him leaping light,
 His cursed hand withheld, and maistered his might.

32

From her, to whom his fury first he ment,
 The wicked weapon rashly he did wrest,
 And turning to the next his fell intent,
 Unwares it strooke into her snowie chest,
 That litle drops empurpled her faire brest.
 Exceeding wroth therewith the virgin grew,
 Albe the wound were nothing deepe imprest,
 And fiercely forth her mortall blade she drew,
 To give him the reward for such vile outrage dew.

33

So mightily she smote him, that to ground
 He fell halfe dead : next stroke him should have
 slaine,

34

Had not the Lady, which by him stood bound,
 Dernly unto her called to abstaine
 From doing him to dy : For else her paine
 Should be remedillesse ; sith none but hee
 Which wrought it could the same recure againe.
 Therewith she stayd her hand, loth stayd to bee ;
 For life she him envyde, and long'd revenge to see :

And to him said ; " Thou wicked man, whose meed
 For so huge mischiefe and vile villany
 Is death, or if that ought doe death exceed ;
 Be sure that nought may save thee from to dy
 But if that thou this Dame do presently
 Restore unto her health and former state :
 This doe, and live, els dye undoubtedly."
 He, glad of life, that lookt for death but late,
 Did yield him selfe right willing to prolong his date :

And rising up gan streight to over-looke 36
Those cursed leaves, his charmes back to reverse.
Full dreadfull thinges out of that balefull booke
He red, and measur'd many a sad verse,
That horroure gan the virgins hart to perse,
And her faire locks up stared stiffe on end,
Hearing him those same bloody lynes reherse;
And, all the while he red, she did extend
Her sword high over him, if ought he did offend.

Anon she gan perceive the house to quake, 37
And all the dores to rattle round about:
Yet all that did not her dismaied make,
Nor slack her threatfull hand for daungers dout;
But still with stedfast eye and courage stout
Abode, to weet what end would come of all.
At last that mightie chaine, which round about
Her tender waste was wound, adowne gan fall,
And that great brasen pillour broke in peeces small.

The cruell steele, which thirld her dying hart, 38
Fell softly forth, as of his owne accord,
And the wyde wound, which lately did dispart
Her bleeding brest, and riven bowels gor'd,
Was closed up, as it had not beene sor'd;
And every part to safety full sownd,
As she were never hurt, was soone restord.
Tho, when she felt her selfe to be unbownd
And perfect hole, prostrate she fell unto the grownd.

Before faire Britomart she fell prostrate, 39
Saying; "Ah noble knight! what worthy meede
Can wretched Lady, quitt from wofull state,
Yield you in lieu of this your gracious deed?
Your vertue selfe her owne reward shall breed,
Even immortal prayse and glory wyde,
Which I your vassall, by your prowesse freed,
Shall through the world make to be notifyde,
And goodly well advaunce that goodly well was tryde."

But Britomart, uprearing her from grownd, 40
 Said: "Gentle Dame, reward enough I weene,
 For many labours more than I have found,
 This, that in safetie now I have you seene,
 And meane of your deliverance have beene.
 Henceforth, faire Lady, comfort to you take,
 And put away remembrance of late teene;
 In sted thereof, know that your loving Make
 Hath no lesse grieve endured for your gentle sake."

She much was cheard to heare him mentiond, 41
 Whom of all living wightes she loved best.
 Then laid the noble Championesse strong hond
 Upon th' enchaunter which had her distrest
 So sore, and with foule outrages opprest.
 With that great chaine, wherewith not long ygoe
 He bound that pitteous Lady prisoner, now relest,
 Himselfe she bound, more worthy to be so,
 And captive with her led to wretchednesse and wo.

Returning back, those goodly rowmes, which erst 42
 She saw so rich and royally arayd,
 Now vanisht utterly and cleane subverst
 She found, and all their glory quite decayd;
 That sight of such a chaunge her much dismayd.
 Thenceforth descending to that perlous porch,
 Those dreadfull flames she also found delayd
 And quenched quite like a consumed torch,
 That erst all entrers wont so cruelly to scorch.

More easie issew now then entrance late 43
 She found; for now that fained dreadfull flame,
 Which chokt the porch of that enchaunted gate
 And passage bard to all that thither came,
 Was vanisht quite, as it were not the same,
 And gave her leave at pleasure forth to passe.
 Th' Enchaunter selfe, which all that fraud did frame
 To have efforst the love of that faire lasse,
 Seeing his worke now wasted, deepe engrieved was.

But when the Victoress arrived there 44
Where late she left the pensife Scudamore
With her own trusty Squire, both full of feare,
Neither of them she found where she them lore :
Thereat her noble hart was stonisht sore ;
But most faire Amoret, whose gentle spright
Now gan to feede on hope, which she before
Conceived had, to see her own deare knight,
Being thereof beguyld, was fild with new affright.

But he, sad man, when he had long in drede 45
Awayted there for Britomarts returne,
Yet sawe her not, nor signe of her good speed,
His expectation to despaire did turne,
Misdeeming sure that her those flames did burne ;
And therefore gan advize with her old Squire,
Who her deare nourslings losse no lesse did mourne,
Thence to depart for further aide t' enquire :
Where let them wend at will, whilst here I doe respire.



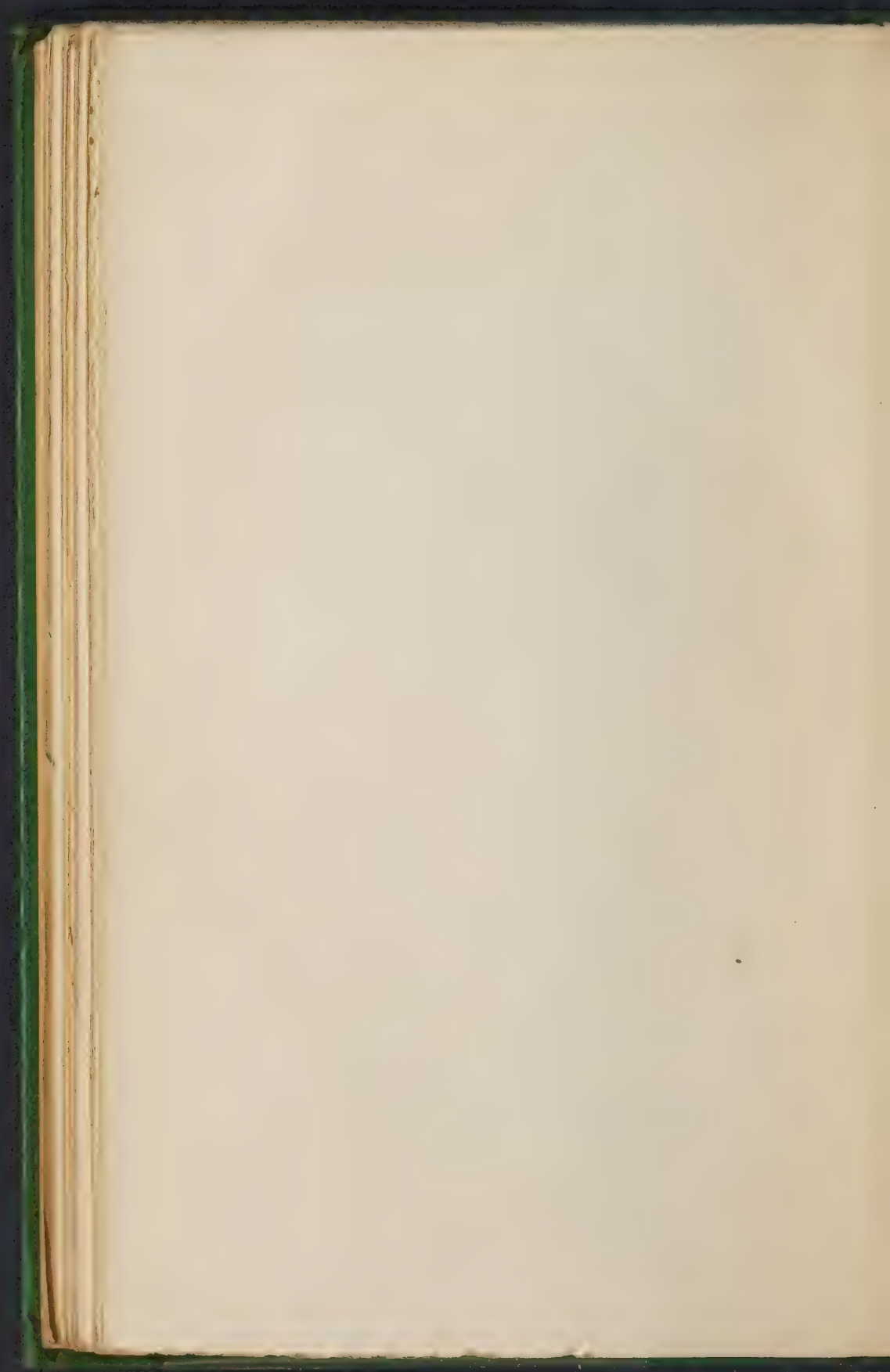
THE SECOND PART OF
THE FAERIE QUEENE.

CONTAINING THE FOURTH, FIFTH,
AND SIXTH BOOKES.

BY ED. SPENSER.

Imprinted at LONDON for
William Ponsonby.

1596.





THE FOURTH BOOKE OF
THE FAERIE QUEENE.

CONTAINING THE LEGEND OF CAMBEL AND TRIAMOND,
OR OF FRIENDSHIP.

THE rugged forehead, that with grave fore-
sight [state,
Welds kingdomes causes and affaires of
My looser rimes (I wote) doth sharply
For praising love as I have done of late, [wite
And magnifying lovers deare debate ;
By which fraile youth is oft to follie led,
Through false allurement of that pleasing baite,
That better were in vertues disciplined,
Then with vaine poemes weeds to have their fancies fed.

Such ones ill judge of love that cannot love, 2
Ne in their frosen hearts feele kindly flame :
For thy they ought not thing unknowne reprove,
Ne naturall affection faultlesse blame
For fault of few that have abusd the same ;
For it of honor and all vertue is
The roote, and brings forth glorious flowres of fame,
That crowne true lovers with immortall blis,
The meed of them that love, and do not live amisse.

Which who so list looke backe to former ages, 3
And call to count the things that then were donne,
Shall find that all the workes of those wise sages,
And brave exploits which great Heroes wonne,
In love were either ended or begunne :
Witnesse the father of Philosophie,
Which to his Critias, shaded oft from sunne,
Of love full manie lessons did apply,
The which these Sticke censours cannot well deny.

To such therefore I do not sing at all ; 4
But to that sacred Saint my soveraigne Queene,
In whose chast brest all bountie naturall
And treasures of true love enlocked beene,
Bove all her sexe that ever yet was seene :
To her I sing of love, that loveth best,
And best is lov'd of all alive, I weene ;
To her this song most fitly is addrest,
The Queene of love, and Prince of peace from heaven
blest.

Which that she may the better deigne to heare, 5
Do thou, dred infant, Venus dearling dove,
From her high spirit chase imperious feare,
And use of awfull Majestie remove :
In sted thereof with drops of melting love,
Deawd with ambrosiall kisses, by thee gotten
From thy sweete smyling mother from above,
Sprinckle her heart, and haughtie courage soften,
That she may hearke to love, and reade this lesson
often.

CANTO I.

*Fayre Britomart saves Amoret:
 Duessa discord breedes
 Twixt Scudamour and Blandamour;
 Their fight and wurlike deedes.*

OF lovers sad calamities of old 1
 Full many piteous stories doe remaine,
 But none more piteous ever was ytold
 Then that of Amorets hart-binding chaine,
 And this of Florimels unworthie paine :
 The deare compassion of whose bitter fit
 My softened heart so sorely doth constraine,
 That I with teares full oft doe pittie it,
 And oftentimes doe wish it never had bene writ.

For from the time that Scudamour her bought 2
 In perilous fight she never joyed day ;
 A perilous fight, when he with force her brought
 From twentie Knights that did him all assay ;
 Yet fairely well he did them all dismay,
 And with great glorie both the shield of love
 And eke the Ladie selfe he brought away ;
 Whom having wedded, as did him behove,
 A new unknownen mischiefe did from him remove.

For that same vile Enchauntour Busyran, 3
 The very selfe same day that she was wedded,
 Amidst the bridale feast, whilest every man,
 Surcharg'd with wine, were heedlesse and ill hedded,
 All bent to mirth before the bride was bedded,
 Brought in that mask of love which late was shoven ;
 And there the Ladie, ill of friends bestedded,
 By way of sport, as oft in maskes is knownen,
 Conveyed quite away to living wight unknownen.

Seven moneths he so her kept in bitter smart, 4
Because his sinfull lust she would not serve,
Untill such time as noble Britomart
Released her, that else was like to sterve
Through cruell knife that her deare heart did kerve:
And now she is with her upon the way
Marching in lovely wise, that could deserve
No spot of blame, though spite did oft assay
To blot her with dishonor of so faire a pray.

Yet should it be a pleasant tale, to tell 5
The diverse usage, and demeanure daint,
That each to other made, as oft befell:
For Amoret right fearefull was and faint
Lest she with blame her honor should attain,
That everie word did tremble as she spake,
And everie looke was coy and wondrous quaint,
And everie limbe that touched her did quake;
Yet could she not but curteous countenance to her
make.

For well she wist, as true it was indeed, 6
That her live's Lord and patrone of her health
Right well deserved, as his duefull meed,
Her love, her service, and her utmost wealth:
All is his justly that all freely dealth.
Nathlesse her honor, dearer then her life,
She sought to save, as thing reserv'd from stealth.
Die had she lever with Enchanters knife
Then to be false in love, profest a virgine wife

Thereto her feare was made so much the greater 7
Through fine abusion of that Briton mayd;
Who, for to hide her fained sex the better
And maske her wounded mind, both did and sayd
Full many things so doubtfull to be wayd,
That well she wist not what by them to gesse:
For other whiles to her she purpos made
Of love, and other whiles of lustfulnesse,
That much she feard his mind would grow to some
excesse.

His will she feard; for him she surely thought 8
To be a man, such as indeed he seemed;
And much the more by that he lately wrought,
When her from deadly thraldome he redeemed,
For which no service she too much esteemed:
Yet dread of shame and doubt of fowle dishonor
Made her not yeeld so much as due she deemed.
Yet Britomart attended duly on her,
As well became a knight, and did to her all honor.

It so befell one evening, that they came 9
Unto a Castell, lodged there to bee,
Where many a knight, and many a lovely Dame
Was then assembled deeds of armes to see:
Amongst all which was none more faire then shee,
That many of them mov'd to eye her sore.
The custome of that place was such, that hee,
Which had no love nor lemman there in store,
Should either winne him one, or lye without the dore.

Amongst the rest there was a jolly knight, 10
Who, being asked for his love, avow'd
That fairest Amoret was his by his right,
And offred that to justifie alowd.
The warlike virgine, seeing his so prowde
And boastfull chalenge, wexed inlie wroth;
But for the present did her anger shrowd,
And sayd, her love to lose she was full loth,
But either he should neither of them have, or both.

So forth they went, and both together giusted; 11
But that same younker soone was overthrowne,
And made repent that he had rashly lusted
For thing unlawfull, that was not his owne:
Yet since he seemed valiant, though unknowne,
She, that no lesse was courteous then stout,
Cast how to salve, that both the custome showne
Were kept, and yet that Knight not locked out;
That seem'd full hard t' accord two things so far in dout.

The Seneschall was cal'd to deeme the right: 12
Whom she requir'd, that first fayre Amoret
Might be to her allow'd, as to a Knight
That did her win and free from chalenge set:
Which straight to her was yeelded without let.
Then, since that strange Knights love from him was
quitted,

She claim'd that to her selfe, as Ladies det,
He as a Knight might justly be admitted;
So none should be out shut, sith all of loves were fitted.

With that, her glistring helmet she unlaced; 13
Which doft, her golden lockes, that were upbound
Still in a knot, unto her heeles downe traced,
And like a silken veile in compasse round
About her backe and all her bodie wound:
Like as the shining skie in summers night,
What time the dayes with scorching heat abound,
Is creasted all with lines of firie light,
That it prodigious seemes in common peoples sight.

Such when those Knights and Ladies all about 14
Beheld her, all were with amazement smit,
And every one gan grow in secret dout
Of this and that, according to each wit:
Some thought that some enchantment faygned it;
Some, that Bellona in that warlike wise
To them appear'd, with shield and armour fit;
Some, that it was a maske of strange disguise:
So diversely each one did sundrie doubts devise.

But that young Knight, which through her gentle deed
Was to that goodly fellowship restor'd,
Ten thousand thankes did yeeld her for her meed,
And, doubly overcommen, her ador'd.
So did they all their former strife accord;
And eke fayre Amoret, now freed from feare,
More franke affection did to her afford,
And to her bed, which she was wont forbeare,
Now freely drew, and found right safe assurance theare.

Where all that night they of their loves did treat, 16
And hard adventures, twixt themselves alone,
That each the other gan with passion great
And grieffull pittie privately bemone.
The morow next, so soone as Titan shone,
They both uprose and to their waies them dight :
Long wandred they, yet never met with none
That to their willes could them direct aright,
Or to them tydings tell that mote their harts delight.

Lo! thus they rode, till at the last they spide 17
Two armed Knights that toward them did pace,
And ech of them had ryding by his side
A Ladie, seeming in so farre a space :
But Ladies none they were, albee in face
And outward shew faire semblance they did beare ;
For under maske of beautie and good grace
Vile treason and fowle falshood hidden were,
That mote to none but to the warie wise appeare.

The one of them the false Duessa hight, 18
That now had chang'd her former wonted hew ;
For she could d'on so manie shapes in sight,
As ever could Cameleon colours new ;
So could she forge all colours, save the trew.
The other no whit better was then shee,
But that such as she was she plaine did shew ;
Yet otherwise much worse, if worse might bee,
And dayly more offensive unto each degree.

Her name was Atè, mother of debate 19
And all dissention which doth dayly grow
Amongst fraile men, that many a publike state,
And many a private oft doth overthrow.
Her false Duessa, who full well did know
To be most fit to trouble noble knights
Which hunt for honor, raised from below
Out of the dwellings of the damned sprights,
Where she in darknes wastes her cursed daies and nights.

Hard by the gates of hell her dwelling is ; 20
There, whereas all the plagues and harmes abound
Which punish wicked men that walke amisse :
It is a darksome delve farre under ground,
With thornes and barren brakes enviroind round,
That none the same may easily out win :
Yet many waies to enter may be found,
But none to issue forth when one is in ;
For discord harder is to end then to begin.

And all within, the riven walls were hung 21
With ragged monuments of times forepast,
All which the sad effects of discord sung :
There were rent robes and broken scepters plast ;
Altars defyld, and holy things defast ;
Disshivered speares, and shields ytorne in twaine ;
Great cities ransackt, and strong castles rast ;
Nations captived, and huge armies slaine :
Of all which ruines there some relicks did remaine.

There was the signe of antique Babylon ; 22
Of fatall Thebes ; of Rome that raigned long ;
Of sacred Salem ; and sad Ilion,
For memorie of which on high there hong
The golden Apple, cause of all their wrong,
For which the three faire Goddesses did strive :
There also was the name of Nimrod strong ;
Of Alexander, and his Princes five
Which shar'd to them the spoiles that he had got alive.

And there the relicks of the drunken fray, 23
The which amongst the Lapithees befell ;
And of the bloodie feast, which sent away
So many Centaures drunken soules to hell,
That under great Alcides furie fell ;
And of the dreadfull discord, which did drive
The noble Argonauts to outrage fell ;
That each of life sought others to deprive, [strive.
All mindlesse of the Golden fleece, which made them

And eke of private persons many moe, 24
That were too long a worke to count them all;
Some, of sworne friends that did their faith forgoe;
Some, of borne brethren prov'd unnaturall;
Some of deare lovers foes perpetuall:
Witnesse their broken bandes there to be seene,
Their girlonds rent, their bowres despoyled all;
The moniments whereof there byding beene,
Asplaine as at the first when they were fresh and greene.

Such was her house within; but all without, 25
The barren ground was full of wicked weedes,
Which she her selfe had sown all about,
Now grown great, at first of little seedes,
The seedes of evill wordes and factious deedes;
Which, when to ripenesse due they grown arre,
Bring forth an infinite increase, that breedes
Tumultuous trouble, and contentious jarre,
The which most often end in bloudshed and in warre.

And those same cursed seedes doe also serve 26
To her for bread, and yeeld her living food:
For life it is to her, when others sterve
Through mischievous debate and deadly feod,
That she may sucke their life, and drinke their blood,
With which she from her childhood had bene fed;
For she at first was borne of hellish brood,
And by infernall furies nourished;
That by her monstrous shape might easily be red.

Her face most fowle and filthy was to see, 27
With squinted eyes contrarie wayes intended,
And loathly mouth, unmeete a mouth to bee,
That nought but gall and venim comprehended,
And wicked wordes that God and man offended.
Her lying tongue was in two parts divided,
And both the parts did speake, and both contended;
And as her tongue so was her hart discided,
That never thoght one thing, but doubly stil was guided.

Als as she double spake, so heard she double, . 28
With matchlesse eares deformed and distort,
Fild with false rumors and seditious trouble,
Bred in assemblies of the vulgar sort,
That still are led with every light report :
And as her eares, so eke her feet were odde,
And much unlike ; th' one long, the other short,
And both misplast ; that, when th' one forward yode,
The other backe retired and contrarie trode.

Likewise unequall were her handes twaine ; 29
That one did reach the other pusht away ;
That one did make the other mard againe,
And sought to bring all things unto decay ;
Whereby great riches, gathered manie a day,
She in short space did often bring to nought,
And their possessours often did dismay :
For all her studie was, and all her thought
How she might overthrow the things that Concord
wrought.

So much her malice did her might surpas, 30
That even th' Almighty selfe she did maligne,
Because to man so mercifull he was,
And unto all his creatures so benigne,
Sith she her selfe was of his grace indigne ;
For all this worlds faire workmanship she tride
Unto his last confusion to bring,
And that great golden chaine quite to divide,
With which it blessed Concord hath together tide.

Such was that hag which with Duessa roade ; 31
And, serving her in her malitious use
To hurt good knights, was, as it were, her baude
To sell her borrowed beautie to abuse :
For though, like withered tree that wanteth juyce,
She old and crooked were, yet now of late
As fresh and fragrant as the floure deluce
She was become, by chaunge of her estate,
And made full goodly joyance to her new found mate.

Her mate, he was a jollie youthfull knight 32
That bore great sway in armes and chivalrie,
And was indeed a man of mickle might;
His name was Blandamour, that did descrie
His fickle mind full of inconstancie:
And now himselfe he fitted had right well
With two companions of like qualitie,
Faithlesse Duessa, and false Paridell,
That whether were more false full hard it is to tell.

Now, when this gallant with his goodly crew 33
From farre espide the famous Britomart,
Like knight adventurous in outward vew,
With his faire paragon, his conquests part,
Approching nigh, eftsoones his wanton hart
Was tickled with delight, and jesting sayd
"Lo! there, Sir Paridel, for your desart
Good lucke presents you with yond lovely mayd,
For pitie that ye want a fellow for your ayd."

By that the lovely paire drew nigh to hond: 34
Whom when as Paridel more plaine beheld,
Albee in heart he like affection fond,
Yet mindfull how he late by one was feld
That did those armes and that same scutchion weld,
He had small lust to buy his love so deare,
But answered; "Sir, him wise I never held,
That having once escaped perill neare,
Would afterwards afresh the sleeping evill reare.

"This knight too late his manhood and his might 35
I did assay, that me right dearely cost;
Ne list I for revenge provoke new fight,
Ne for light Ladies love that soone is lost."
The hot-spurre youth so scorning to be crost,
"Take then to you this Dame of mine," (quoth hee)
"And I, without your perill or your cost,
Will challenge yond same other for my fee."
So forth he fiercely prickt that one him scarce could see

The warlike Britonesse her soone addrest, 36
And with such uncouth welcome did receave
Her fayned Paramour, her forced guest,
That being forst his saddle soone to leave,
Him selfe he did of his new love deceave;
And made him selfe thensample of his follie.
Which done, she passed forth, not taking leave,
And left him now as sad, as whilome jollie,
Well warned to beware with whom he dar'd to dallie.

Which when his other companie beheld, 37
They to his succour ran with readie ayd;
And, finding him unable once to weld,
They reared him on horsebacke and upstayd,
Till on his way they had him forth conveyd:
And all the way, with wondrous grieve of mynd
And shame, he shewd him selfe to be dismayd
More for the love which he had left behynd,
Then that which he had to Sir Paridel resynd.

Nathlesse he forth did march, well as he might, 38
And made good semblance to his companie,
Dissembling his disease and evill plight;
Till that ere long they chaunced to espie
Two other knights, that towards them did ply
With speedie course, as bent to charge them new:
Whom when as Blandamour approching nie
Perceiv'd to be such as they seemd in vew,
He was full wo, and gan his former grieve renew.

For th' one of them he perfectly describe 39
To be Sir Scudamour, by that he bore
The God of love with wings displayed wide,
Whom mortally he hated evermore,
Both for his worth, that all men did adore,
And eke because his love he wonne by right:
Which when he thought, it grieved him full sore,
That through the bruises of his former fight,
He now unable was to wreake his old despight.

For thy he thus to Paridel bespake :

40

“ Faire Sir, of friendship let me now you pray,
That as I late adventured for your sake,
The hurts whereof me now from battell stay,
Ye will me now with like good turne repay,
And justifie my cause on yonder knight.”

“ Ah ! Sir,” (said Paridell) “ do not dismay
Your selfe for this ; my selfe will for you fight,
As ye have done for me : the left hand rubs the right.”

With that he put his spurres unto his steed,

41

With speare in rest, and toward him did fare,
Like shaft out of a bow preventing speed :
But Scudamour was shortly well aware
Of his approch, and gan him selfe prepare
Him to receive with entertainment meete.
So furiously they met, that either bare
The other downe under their horses feete,
That what of them became themselves did scarsly weete.

As when two billowes in the Irish sowndes,

42

Forcibly driven with contrarie tydes,
Do meete together, each abacke rebowndes,
With roaring rage ; and dashing on all sides,
That filleth all the sea with fome, divydes
The doubtfull current into divers wayes.
So fell those two in spight of both their prydes ;
But Scudamour himselfe did soone uprayse,
And, mounting light, his foe for lying long upbrayes :

Who, rolled on an heape, lay still in swoond

43

All carelesse of his taunt and bitter rayle ;
Till that the rest him seeing lie on ground
Ran hastily, to weete what did him ayle.
Where finding that the breath gan him to fayle,
With busie care they strove him to awake,
And doft his helmet, and undid his mayle :
So much they did, that at the last they brake
His slomber, yet so mazed that he nothing spake.

Which when as Blandamour beheld, he sayd ; 44
“ False faitour Scudamour, that hast by slight
And foule advantage this good Knight dismayd,
A Knight much better then thy selfe behight,
Well falles it thee that I am not in plight
This day to wreake the dammage by thee donne.
Such is thy wont, that still when any Knight
Is weakned, then thou doest him overronne :
So hast thou to thy selfe false honour often wonne.”

He little answer'd, but in manly heart 45
His mightie indignation did forbear ;
Which was not yet so secret, but some part
Thereof did in his frowning face appeare :
Like as a gloomie cloud, the which doth beare
An hideous storme, is by the Northerne blast
Quite overblowne, yet doth not passe so cleare,
But that it all the skie doth overcast
With darknes dred, and threatens all the world to wast.

“ Ah gentle knight ! ” then false Duessa sayd, 46
“ Why do ye strive for Ladies love so sore,
Whose chiefe desire is love and friendly aid
Mongst gentle Knights to nourish evermore ?
Ne be ye wroth, Sir Scudamour, therefore
That she your love list love another knight,
Ne do your selfe dislike a whit the more ;
For Love is free, and led with selfe delight,
Ne will enforced be with maisterdome or might.”

So false Duessa ; but vile Atè thus : 47
“ Both foolish knights ! I can but laugh at both,
That strive and storme with stirre outrageous
For her, that each of you alike doth loth,
And loves another, with whom now she goth
In lovely wise, and sleepes, and sports, and playes ;
Whilest both you here with many a cursed oth
Sweare she is yours, and stirre up bloudie frayes,
To win a willow bough, whilest other weares the bayes.

"Vile hag!" (sayd Scudamour) "why dost thou lye, 48
And falsly seekst a vertuous wight to shame?" [eye
"Fond knight," (sayd she) "the thing that with this
I saw, why should I doubt to tell the same?"

"Then tell," (quoth Blandamour) "and feare no
blame;

Tell what thou saw'st, maulgre who so it heares."

"I saw" (quoth she) "a straunger knight, whose name
I wote not well, but in his shield he beares
(That well I wote) the heads of many broken speares;

"I saw him have your Amoret at will; 49

I saw him kisse; I saw him her embrace;

I saw him sleepe with her all night his fill;

All, manie nights; and manie by in place

That present were to testifie the case."

Which when as Scudamour did heare, his heart

Was thrild with inward griefe: as when in chace

The Parthian strikes a stag with shivering dart,

The beast astonisht stands in midst of his smart.

So stood Sir Scudamour when this he heard, 50

Ne word he had to speake for great dismay,

But lookt on Glauce grim; who woxe afeard

Of outrage for the words which she heard say,

Albee untrue she wist them by assay.

But Blandamour, whenas he did espie

His chaunge of cheere that anguish did bewray,

He woxe full blithe, as he had got thereby,

And gan thereat to triumph without victorie.

"Lo! recreant," (sayd he) "the fruitlesse end 51

Of thy vaine boast, and spoile of love misgotten,

Whereby the name of knight-hood thou dost shend,

And all true lovers with dishonor blotten:

All things not rooted well will soone be rotten."

"Fy, fy! false knight," (then false Duessa cryde)

"Unworthy life, that love with guile hast gotten;

Be thou, where ever thou do go or ryde,

Loathed of ladies all, and of all knights defyde!"

But Scudamour, for passing great despight, 52
Staid not to answer; scarcely did refraine
But that in all those knights and ladies sight
He for revenge had guiltlesse Glauce slaine:
But, being past, he thus began amaine:
"False traitour squire! false squire of falsest knight!
Why doth mine hand from thine avenge abstaine,
Whose Lord hath done my love this foule despight?
Why do I not it wreake on thee, now in my might?"

"Discourteous, disloyall Britomart, 53
Untrue to God, and unto man unjust!
What vengeance due can equall thy desart,
That hast with shamefull spot of sinfull lust
Defil'd the pledge committed to thy trust?
Let ugly shame and endlesse infamy
Colour thy name with foule reproaches rust!
Yet thou, false Squire, his fault shall deare aby,
And with thy punishment his penance shalt supply."

The aged Dame, him seeing so enraged, 54
Was dead with feare; nathlesse, as neede required,
His flaming furie sought to have assuaged
With sober words, that sufferance desired,
Till time the tryall of her truth expyred;
And evermore sought Britomart to cleare:
But he the more with furious rage was fyred,
And thrise his hand to kill her did upreare,
And thrise he drew it backe: so, did at last forbear.

CANTO II.

*Blandamour winnes false Florimell;
 Paridell for her strives:
 They are accorded: Agape
 doth lengthen her sonnes lives.*

FIREBRAND of hell, first tynd in Phlegeton
 By thousand furies, and from thence out
 throwen

Into this world to worke confusion,
 And set it all on fire by force unknowen,
 Is wicked discord; whose small sparkes once blown
 None but a God or godlike man can slake;
 Such as was Orpheus, that, when strife was growen
 Amongst those famous ympes of Greece, did take
 His silver Harpe in hand and shortly friends them make:

Or such as that celestiall Psalmist was, 2
 That, when the wicked feend his Lord tormented,
 With heavenly notes, that did all other pas,
 The outrage of his furious fit relented.
 Such Musicke is wise words, with time concented,
 To moderate stiffe mindes disposd to strive:
 Such as that prudent Romane well invented,
 What time his people into partes did rive,
 Them reconcyld againe, and to their homes did drive.

Such us'd wise Glauce to that wrathfull knight, 3
 To calme the tempest of his troubled thought:
 Yet Blandamour with termes of foule despight,
 And Paridell her scornd, and set at nought,
 As old and crooked and not good for ought.
 Both they unwise, and warelesse of the evill
 That by themselves unto themselves is wrought
 Through that false witch, and that foule aged drevill;
 The one a feend, the other an incarnate devill.

With whom as they thus rode accompanide, 4
They were encountred of a lustie Knight
That had a goodly Ladie by his side,
To whom he made great dalliance and delight:
It was to weete the bold Sir Ferraugh hight,
He that from Braggadocchio whilome reft
The snowy Florimell, whose beautie bright
Made him seeme happie for so glorious theft;
Yet was it in due triall but a wandring weft.

Which when as Blandamour, whose fancie light 5
Was alwaies flitting as the wavering wind
After each beautie that appeard in sight,
Beheld, eftsoones it prickt his wanton mind
With sting of lust that reasons eye did blind,
That to Sir Paridell these words he sent:
"Sir knight, why ride ye dumpish thus behind,
Since so good fortune doth to you present
So fayre a spoyle, to make you joyous meriment?"

But Paridell, that had too late a tryall 6
Of the bad issue of his counsell vaine,
List not to hearke, but made this faire denyall:
"Last turne was mine, well proved to my paine;
This now be yours; God send you better gaine!"
Whose scoffed words he taking halfe in scorne,
Fiercely forth prickt his steed as in disdaine
Against that Knight, ere he him well could torne;
By meanes whereof he hath him lightly overborne.

Who, with the sudden stroke astonisht sore, 7
Upon the ground awhile in slomber lay;
The whiles his love away the other bore,
And, shewing her, did Paridell upbray;
"Lo! sluggish Knight, the victors happie pray!
So fortune friends the bold:" whom Paridell
Seeing so faire indeede, as he did say,
His hart with secret envie gan to swell,
And inly grudge at him that he had sped so well.

Nathlesse proud man himselfe the other deemed, 8
Having so peerelesse paragon ygot :
For sure the fayrest Florimell him seemed
To him was fallen for his happie lot,
Whose like alive on earth he weened not :
Therefore he her did court, did serve, did woove,
With humblest suit that he imagine mot,
And all things did devise, and all things dooe,
That might her love prepare, and liking win theretoo.

She, in regard thereof, him recompens 9
With golden words and goodly countenance,
And such fond favours sparingly dispenst :
Sometimes him blessing with a light eye-glance,
And coy lookes tempring with loose dalliance ;
Sometimes estranging him in sterner wise ;
That having cast him in a foolish trance,
He seemed brought to bed in Paradise, [wise.
And prov'd himselfe most foole in what he seem'd most

So great a mistresse of her art she was, 10
And perfectly practiz'd in womans craft,
That though therein himselfe he thought to pas,
And by his false allurements wylie draft
Had thousand women of their love beraft,
Yet now he was surpriz'd : for that false spright,
Which that same witch had in this forme engraft,
Was so expert in every subtile slight,
That it could overreach the wisest earthly wight.

Yet he to her did dayly service more, 11
And dayly more deceived was thereby ;
Yet Paridell him envied therefore,
As seeming plast in sole felicity :
So blind is lust false colours to descry.
But Atè soone discovering his desire,
And finding now fit opportunity
To stirre up strife twixt love and spight and ire,
Did privily put coles unto his secret fire.

By sundry meanes thereto she prickt him forth; 12
Now with remembrance of those spightfull speaches,
Now with opinion of his owne more worth,
Now with recounting of like former breaches
Made in their friendship, as that Hag him teaches:
And ever when his passion is allayd,
She it revives, and new occasion reaches;
That on a time, as they together way'd,
He made him open chalenge, and thus boldly sayd;

"Too boastfull Blandamour! too long I beare 13
The open wrongs thou doest me day by day:
Well know'st thou, when we friendship first did
swear,

The covenant was, that every spoyle or pray
Should equally be shard betwixt us tway.
Where is my part then of this Ladie bright,
Whom to thy selfe thou takest quite away?
Render therefore therein to me my right,
Or answere for thy wrong as shall fall out in fight."

Exceeding wroth thereat was Blandamour, 14
And gan this bitter answere to him make:
"Too foolish Paridell! that fayrest floure
Wouldst gather faine, and yet no paines wouldst take:
But not so easie will I her forsake;
This hand her wonne, this hand shall her defend."
With that they gan their shivering speares to shake,
And deadly points at eithers breast to bend,
Forgetfull each to have bene ever others frend.

Their fire steedes with so untamed forse 15
Did beare them both to fell avenges end,
That both their speares with pitillesse remorse
Through shield and mayle and haberjeon did wend,
And in their flesh a griesly passage rend,
That with the furie of their owne affret
Each other horse and man to ground did send;
Where, lying still awhile, both did forget
The perilous present stownd in which their lives were set.

As when two warlike Brigandines at sea, 16
With murderous weapons arm'd to cruell fight,
Do meete together on the watry lea,
They stemme ech other with so fell despight,
That with the shocke of their owne heedlesse might
Their wooden ribs are shaken nigh a sonder.
They which from shore behold the dreadfull sight
Of flashing fire, and heare the ordenance thonder,
Do greatly stand amaz'd at such unwonted wonder.

At length they both upstart in amaze, 17
As men awaked rashly out of dreme,
And round about themselves a while did gaze ;
Till seeing her, that Florimell did seme,
In doubt to whom she victorie should deeme,
Therewith their dulled sprights they edgd anew,
And drawing both their swords with rage extreme,
Like two mad mastiffes, each on other flew,
And shields did share, and mailles did rash, and helmes
did hew.

So furiously each other did assayle, 18
As if their soules they would attonce have rent
Out of their brests, that streames of bloud did rayle
Adowne, as if their springs of life were spent ;
That all the ground with purple bloud was sprent,
And all their armours staynd with bloudie gore ;
Yet scarcely once to breath would they relent,
So mortall was their malice, and so sore
Become, of fayned friendship which they vow'd afore.

And that which is for Ladies most besitting, 19
To stint all strife and foster friendly peace,
Was from those Dames so farre and so unfitting,
As that, in stead of praying them surcease,
They did much more their cruelty encrease ;
Bidding them fight for honour of their love,
And rather die then Ladies cause release : [move,
With which vaine termes so much they did them
That both resolv'd the last extremities to prove.

There they, I weene, would fight untill this day, 20
Had not a Squire, even he the Squire of Dames,
By great adventure travelled that way;
Who seeing both bent to so bloudy games,
And both of old well knowing by their names,
Drew nigh, to weete the cause of their debate:
And first laide on those Ladies thousand blames,
That did not seeke t'appease their deadly hate,
But gazed on their harmes, not pittying their estate.

And then those Knights he humbly did beseech 21
To stay their hands, till he a while had spoken;
Who lookt a little up at that his speech,
Yet would not let their battell so be broken,
Both greedie fiers on other to be wroken:
Yet he to them so earnestly did call,
And them conjur'd by some well knownen token,
That they at last their wrothfull hands let fall,
Content to heare him speake, and glad to rest withall.

First he desir'd their cause of strife to see: 22
They said, it was for love of Florimell. [bee,
"Ah gentle Knights!" (quoth he) "how may that
And she so farre astray, as none can tell?"
"Fond Squire," full angry then sayd Paridell,
"Seest not the Ladie there before thy face?"
He looked backe, and, her advizing well,
Weend, as he said, by that her outward grace
That fayrest Florimell was present there in place.

Glad man was he to see that joyous sight, 23
For none alive but joy'd in Florimell,
And lowly to her lowting thus behight:
"Fayrest of faire, that fairenesse doest excell,
This happie day I have to greete you well,
In which you safe I see, whom thousand late
Misdoubted lost through mischief that befell.
Long may you live in health and happie state!
She litle answer'd him, but lightly did aggrate.

Then, turning to those Knights, he gan anew : 24

“ And you, Sir Blandamour, and Paridell,
That for this Ladie, present in your vew,
Have rays'd this cruell warre and outrage fell,
Certes, me seemes, bene not advised well ;
But rather ought in friendship for her sake
To joyne your force, their forces to repell
That seeke perforce her from you both to take,
And of your gotten spoyle their owne triumph to make.”

Thereat Sir Blandamour, with countenance sterne 25

All full of wrath, thus fiercely him bespake :
“ Aread, thou Squire, that I the man may learne,
That dare fro me thinke Florimell to take !”
“ Not one,” (quoth he) “ but many doe partake
Herein ; as thus. It lately so befell,
That Satyran a girdle did uptake
Well knowne to appertaine to Florimell,
Which for her sake he wore, as him beseemed well.

“ But when as she her selfe was lost and gone, 26

Full many knights, that loved her like deare,
Therereat did greatly grudge, that he alone
That lost faire Ladies ornament should weare,
And gan therefore close spight to him to beare ;
Which he to shun, and stop vile envies sting,
Hath lately caus'd to be proclaim'd each where
A solemne feast, with publike turneyng,
To which all knights with them their Ladies are to bring:

“ And of them all she, that is fayrest found, 27

Shall have that golden girdle for reward ;
And of those Knights, who is most stout on ground,
Shall to that fairest Ladie be prefard.
Since therefore she her selfe is now your ward,
To you that ornament of hers pertaines,
Against all those that chalenge it, to gard
And save her honour with your ventrous paines :
That shall you win more glory than ye here find gaines.”

When they the reason of his words had hard, 28
They gan abate the rancour of their rage,
And with their honours and their loves regard
The furious flames of malice to asswage.
Tho each to other did his faith engage,
Like faithfull friends thenceforth to joyne in one
With all their force, and battell strong to wage
Gainst all those knights, as their professed fone,
That challeng'd ought in Florimell, save they alone.

So, well accorded, forth they rode together 29
In friendly sort that lasted but a while;
And of all old dislikes they made faire weather;
Yet all was forg'd and spred with golden foyle,
That under it hidde hate and hollow guyle.
Ne certes can that friendship long endure,
However gay and goodly be the style,
That doth ill cause or evill end enure;
For vertue is the band that bindeth harts most sure.

Thus as they marched all in close disguise 30
Of fayned love, they chaunst to overtake
Two knights that lincked rode in lovely wise,
As if they secret counsels did partake;
And each not farre behinde him had his make,
To weete, two Ladies of most goodly hew,
That twixt themselves did gentle purpose make,
Unmindfull both of that discordfull crew,
The which with speedie pace did after them pursew.

Who, as they now approched nigh at hand, 31
Deeming them doughtie, as they did appeare,
They sent that Squire afore, to understand
What mote they be: who, viewing them more neare,
Returned readie newes, that those same weare
Two of the prowest Knights in Faery lond,
And those two Ladies their two lovers deare;
Couragious Cambell, and stout Triamond,
With Canacee and Cambine linckt in lovely bond.

Whylome, as antique stories tellen us, 32
Those two were foes the fellonest on ground,
And battell made the dreddest daungerous
That ever shrilling trumpet did resound;
Though now their acts be no where to be found,
As that renowned Poet them compyled
With warlike numbers and Heroicke sound,
Dan Chaucer, well of English undefyled,
On Fames eternall beadroll worthie to be fyled.

But wicked Time that all good thoughts doth waste,
And workes of noblest wits to nought outweare,
That famous moniment hath quite defaste,
And robd the world of treasure endlesse deare,
The which mote have enriched all us heare.
O cursed Eld! the cankerworme of writs,
How may these rimes, so rude as doth appeare,
Hope to endure, sith workes of heavenly wits
Are quite devourd, and brought to nought by little bits?

Then pardon, O most sacred happie spirit! 34
That I thy labours lost may thus revive,
And steale from thee the meede of thy due merit,
That none durst ever whilest thou wast alive,
And being dead in vaine yet many strive:
Ne dare I like; but, through infusion sweete
Of thine owne spirit which doth in me survive,
I follow here the footing of thy feete,
That with thy meaning so I may the rather meete.

Cambelloes sister was fayre Canacee, 35
That was the learnedst Ladie in her dayes,
Well seene in everie science that mote bee,
And every secret worke of nature's wayes;
In wittie riddles, and in wise soothsayes;
In power of herbes, and tunes of beasts and burds;
And, that augmented all her other prayse,
She modest was in all her deedes and words,
And wondrous chast of life, yet lov'd of Knights and
Lords.

Full many Lords and many Knights her loved, 36
Yet she to none of them her liking lent,
Ne ever was with fond affection moved,
But rul'd her thoughts with goodly government,
For dread of blame and honours blemishment;
And eke unto her lookes a law she made,
That none of them once out of order went,
But like to warie Centonels well stayd,
Still watcht on every side, of secret foes afrayd.

So much the more as she refusd to love, 37
So much the more she loved was and sought,
That oftentimes unquiet strife did move
Amongst her lovers, and great quarrels wrought,
That oft for her in bloudie armes they fought.
Which whenas Cambell, that was stout and wise,
Perceiv'd would breede great mischiefe, he bethought
How to prevent the perill that mote rise,
And turne both him and her to honour, in this wise.

One day, when all that troupe of warlike wooers 38
Assembled were to weet whose she should bee,
All mightie men and dreadfull derring dooers,
(The harder it to make them well agree)
Amongst them all this end he did decree;
That of them all which love to her did make,
They by consent should chose the stoutest three
That with himselfe should combat for her sake,
And of them all the victour should his sister take.

Bold was the chalenge, as himselfe was bold, 39
And courage full of haughtie hardiment,
Approved oft in perils manifold,
Which he atchiev'd to his great ornament:
But yet his sisters skill unto him lent
Most confidence and hope of happie speed,
Conceived by a ring which she him sent,
That, mongst the manie vertues which we reed,
Had power to staunch al wounds that mortally did bleed.

Well was that rings great vertue knowen to all ; 40
That dread thereof and his redoubted might
Did all that youthly rout so much appall,
That none of them durst undertake the fight :
More wise they weend to make of love delight
Then life to hazard for faire Ladies looke ;
And yet uncertaine by such outward sight,
Though for her sake they all that perill tooke,
Whether she would them love, or in her liking brooke.

Amongst those knights there were three brethren bold,
Three bolder brethren never were yborne,
Borne of one mother in one happie mold,
Borne at one burden in one happie morne ;
Thrise happie mother, and thrise happie morne,
That bore three such, three such not to be fond !
Her name was Agape, whose children werne
All three as one ; the first hight Priamond,
The second Dyamond, the youngest Triamond.

Stout Priamond, but not so strong to strike ; 42
Strong Diamond, but not so stout a knight ;
But Triamond was stout and strong alike :
On horsebacke used Triamond to fight,
And Priamond on foote had more delight ;
But horse and foote knew Diamond to wield :
With curtaxe used Diamond to smite,
And Triamond to handle speare and shield,
But speare and curtaxe both used Priamond in field.

These three did love each other dearely well, 43
And with so firme affection were allyde,
As if but one soule in them all did dwell,
Which did her powre into three parts divyde ;
Like three faire branches budding farre and wide,
That from one roote deriv'd their vitall sap :
And like that roote that doth her life divide,
Their mother was ; and had full blessed hap
These three so noble babes to bring forth at one clap.

Their mother was a Fay, and had the skill 44
 Of secret things, and all the powres of nature,
 Which she by art could use unto her will,
 And to her service bind each living creature,
 Through secret understanding of their feature.
 Thereto she was right faire, whenso her face
 She list discover, and of goodly stature;
 But she, as Fayes are wont, in privie place
 Did spend her dayes, and lov'd in forests wyld to space.

There on a day a noble youthly knight, 45
 Seeking adventures in the salvage wood,
 Did by great fortune get of her the sight,
 As she sate carelesse by a cristall flood
 Combing her golden lockes, as seemd her good;
 And unawares upon her laying hold,
 That strove in vaine him long to have withstood,
 Oppressed her, and there (as it is told) [bold.
 Got these three lovely babes, that prov'd three champions

Which she with her long fostred in that wood, 46
 Till that to ripenesse of mans state they grew:
 Then shewing forth signes of their fathers blood,
 They loved armes, and knighthood did ensew,
 Seeking adventures where they anie knew.
 Which when their mother saw, she gan to dout
 Their safetie; least by searching daungers new,
 And rash provoking perils all about, [stout.
 Their dayes mote be abridged through their corage

Therefore desirous th' end of all their dayes 47
 To know, and them t' enlarge with long extent,
 By wondrous skill and many hidden wayes
 To the three fatall sisters house she went.
 Farre under ground from tract of living went,
 Downe in the bottome of the deepe Abyссе,
 Where Demogorgon, in dull darknesse pent
 Farre from the view of gods and heavens bliss,
 The hideous Chaos keepes, their dreadfull dwelling is.

There she them found all sitting round about, 48
The direfull distaffe standing in the mid,
And with unwearied fingers drawing out
The lines of life, from living knowledge hid.
Sad Clotho held the rocke, the whiles the thrid
By griesly Lachesis was spun with paine,
That cruell Atropos eftsoones undid,
With cursed knife cutting the twist in twaine.
Most wretched men, whose dayes depend on thrids so
vaine !

She, them saluting, there by them sate still 49
Beholding how the thrids of life they span :
And when at last she had beheld her fill,
Trembling in heart, and looking pale and wan,
Her cause of comming she to tell began.
To whom fierce Atropos : " Bold Fay, that durst
Come see the secret of the life of man,
Well worthie thou to be of Jove accurst,
And eke thy childrens thrids to be a sunder burst !"

Whereat she sore affrayd, yet her besought 50
To graunt her boone, and rigour to abate,
That shemight see her childrens thrids forth brought,
And know the measure of their utmost date
To them ordained by eternall fate :
Which Clotho graunting shewed her the same.
That when she saw, it did her much amate
To see their thrids so thin as spiders frame,
And eke so short, that seemd their ends out shortly came.

She then began them humbly to intreate 51
To draw them longer out, and better twine,
That so their lives might be prolonged late :
But Lachesis thereat gan to repine,
And sayd ; " Fond dame, that deem'st of things divine
As of humane, that they may altred bee,
And chaung'd at pleasure for those impes of thine !
Not so ; for what the Fates do once decree, [free !"
Not all the gods can chaunge, nor Jove him self can

"Then since" (quoth she) "the terme of each manslife
For nought may lessened nor enlarged bee,
Graunt this ; that when ye shred with fatall knife
His line, which is the eldest of the three,
Which is of them the shortest, as I see,
Eftsoones his life may passe into the next :
And, when the next shall likewise ended bee,
That both their lives may likewise be annex
Unto the third, that his may so be trebly wext."

They graunted it ; and then that carefull Fay 53
Departed thence with full contented mynd ;
And, comming home, in warlike fresh aray
Them found all three according to their kynd :
But unto them what destinie was assynd,
Or how their lives were eekt, she did not tell ;
But evermore, when she fit time could fynd,
She warned them to tend their safeties well,
And love each other deare, what ever them befell.

So did they surely during all their dayes, 54
And never discord did amongst them fall,
Which much augmented all their other praise ;
And now, t'increase affection naturall,
In love of Canacee they joyned all :
Upon which ground this same great battell grew,
Great matter growing of beginning small,
The which, for length, I will not here pursew,
But rather will reserve it for a Canto new.

CANTO III.

*The battell twixt three brethren with
Cambell for Canacee:
Cambina with true friendships bond
doth their long strife agree.*

O ! WHY doe wretched men so much desire
To draw their dayes unto the utmost date,
And doe not rather wish them soone expire,
Knowing the miserie of their estate,
And thousand perills which them still awate,
Tossing them like a boate amid the mayne,
That every houre they knocke at deathes gate?
And he that happie seemes, and least in payne,
Yet is as nigh his end as he that most doth playne.

Therefore this Fay I hold but fond and vaine, 2
The which, in seeking for her children three
Long life, thereby did more prolong their paine:
Yet whilst they lived none did ever see
More happie creatures then they seem'd to bee;
Nor more ennobled for their courtesie,
That made them dearely lov'd of each degree;
Ne more renowned for their chevalrie,
That made them dreaded much of all men farre and nie.

These three that hardie challenge tooke in hand, 3
For Canacee with Cambell for to fight.
The day was set, that all might understand,
And pledges pawnd the same to keepe a right:
That day, the dreddest day that living wight
Did ever see upon this world to shine,
So soone as heavens window shewed light,
These warlike Champions, all in armour shine,
Assembled were in field the chalenge to define.

The field with listes was all about enclos'd, 4
To barre the prease of people farre away ;
And at th' one side sixe judges were dispos'd,
To view and deeme the deedes of armes that day
And on the other side, in fresh aray,
Fayre Canacee upon a stately stage
Was set, to see the fortune of that fray,
And to be seene, as his most worthie wage
That could her purchase with his lives adventur'd gage.

Then entred Cambell first into the list, 5
With stately steps and fearelesse countenance,
As if the conquest his he surely wist.
Soone after did the brethren three advance
In brave aray and goodly amenance,
With scutchins gilt and banners broad displayd ;
And, marching thrise in warlike ordinance,
Thrise lowted lowly to the noble Mayd, [playd.
The whiles shril trumpets and loud clarions sweetly

Which doen, the doughty challenger came forth, 6
All arm'd to point, his chalenge to abet :
Gainst whom Sir Priamond, with equall worth
And equall armes, himselfe did forward set.
A trumpet blew ; they both together met
With dreadfull force and furious intent,
Carelesse of perill in their fiers affret,
As if that life to losse they had forelent,
And cared not to spare that should be shortly spent.

Right practicke was Sir Priamond in fight, 7
And throughly skild in use of shield and speare ;
Ne lesse approved was Cambelloes might,
Ne lesse his skill in weapons did appeare ;
That hard it was to weene which harder were.
Full many mightie strokes on either side
Were sent, that seemed death in them to beare ;
But they were both so watchfull and well eyde,
That they avoyded were, and vainely by did slyde.

Yet one, of many, was so strongly bent 8
By Priamond, that with unluckie glaunce
Through Cambels shoulder it unwarely went,
That forced him his shield to disadvaunce.
Much was he grieved with that gracelesse chaunce;
Yet from the wound no drop of bloud there fell,
But wondrous paine, that did the more enhaunce
His haughtie courage to advengement fell: [swell.
Smart daunts not mighty harts, but makes them more to

With that, his poynant speare he fierce aventred 9
 With doubled force close underneath his shield,
 That through the mayles into his thigh it entred,
 And, there arresting, readie way did yield
 For bloud to gush forth on the grassie field ;
 That he for paine himselfe not right upreare,
 But too and fro in great amazement reel'd ;
 Like an old Oke, whose pith and sap is seare,
 At puffle of every storme doth stagger here and theare.

Whom so dismayd when Cambell had espide, 10
 Againe he drove at him with double might,
 That nought mote stay the steele, till in his side
 The mortall point most cruelly empight;
 Where fast infixed, whilst he sought by slight
 It forth to wrest, the staffe a sunder brake,
 And left the head behinde: with which despight
 He all enrag'd his shivering speare did shake,
 And charging him a fresh thus felly him bespake.

“ Lo ! faitour, there thy meede unto thee take, 11
The meede of thy mischallenge and abet.
Not for thine owne, but for thy sisters sake,
Have I thus long thy life unto thee let :
But to forbear doth not forgive the det.”
The wicked weapon heard his wrathfull vow,
And, passing forth with furious affret,
Pierst through his bever quite into his brow,
That with the force it backward forced him to bow.

Therewith a sunder in the midst it brast, 12
And in his hand nought but the troncheon left;
The other halfe, behind yet sticking fast,
Out of his headpeece Cambell fiercely reft,
And with such furie backe at him it heft,
That making way unto his dearest life,
His weasand pipe it through his gorget cleft.
Thence streames of purple bloud issuing rife
Let forth his wearie ghost, and made an end of strife.

His wearie ghost assoyld from fleshly band 13
Did not, as others wont, directly fly
Unto her rest in Plutoes griesly land;
Ne into ayre did vanish presently,
Ne chaunged was into a starre in sky;
But through traduction was eftsoones derived,
Like as his mother prayd the Destinie,
Into his other brethren that survived,
In whom he liv'd a new, of former life deprived.

Whom when on ground his brother next beheld, 14
Though sad and sorie for so heavy sight,
Yet leave unto his sorrow did not yeeld,
But rather stir'd to vengeance and despight,
Through secret feeling of his generous spright,
Rusht fiercely forth the battell to renew,
As in reversion of his brothers right;
And chalenging the Virgin as his dew,
His foe was soone addrest: the trompets freshly blew.

With that they both together fiercely met, 15
As if that each ment other to devoure;
And with their axes both so sorely bet,
That nether plate nor mayle, whereas their powre
They felt, could once sustaine the hideous stowre,
But rived were like rotten wood a sunder;
Whilest through their rifts the ruddie bloud did
showre,
And fire did flash, like lightning after thunder,
That fild the lookers on attonce with ruth and wonder.

As when two Tygers prickt with hungers rage 16
Have by good fortune found some beasts fresh spoyle,
On which they weene their famine to asswage,
And gaine a feastfull guerdon of their toyle,
Both falling out doe stirre up strifull broyle,
And cruell battell twixt themselves doe make,
Whiles neither lets the other touch the soyle,
But either sdeignes with other to partake :
So cruelly these Knights strove for that Ladies sake.

Full many strokes, that mortally were ment, 17
The whiles were interchaunged twixt them two ;
Yet they were all with so good wariment
Or warded, or avoyded and let goe,
That still the life stood fearelesse of her foe ;
Till Diamond, disdeigning long delay
Of doubtfull fortune wavering to and fro,
Resolv'd to end it one or other way,
And heav'd his murderous axe at him with mighty sway.

The dreadfull stroke, in case it had arrived 18
Where it was ment, (so deadly it was ment)
The soule had sure out of his body rived,
And stinted all the strife incontinent :
But Cambels fate that fortune did prevent ;
For, seeing it at hand, he swarv'd asyde,
And so gave way unto his fell intent ;
Who, missing of the marke which he had eyde,
Was with the force nigh feld, whilst his right foot did
slyde.

As when a Vulture greedie of his pray, 19
Through hunger long that hart to him doth lend,
Strikes at an Heron with all his bodies sway,
That from his force seemes nought may it defend ;
The warie fowle, that spies him toward bend
His dreadfull souse, avoydes it, shunning light,
And maketh him his wing in vaine to spend ;
That with the weight of his owne weeldlesse might
He falleth nigh to ground, and scarce recovereth flight.

Which faire adventure when Cambello spide, 20
Full lightly, ere himselfe he could recover
From daungers dread to ward his naked side,
He can let drive at him with all his power,
And with his axe him smote in evill hower,
That from his shoulders quite his head he reft :
The headlesse tronke, as heedlesse of that stower,
Stood still awhile, and his fast footing kept,
Till, feeling life to fayle, it fell, and deadly slept.

They which that piteous spectacle beheld 21
Were much amaz'd the headlesse tronke to see
Stand up so long, and weapon vaine to weld,
Unweeting of the Fates divine decree
For lifes succession in those brethren three.
For notwithstanding that one soule was reft,
Yet had the bodie not dismembred bee,
It would have lived, and revived eft ;
But, finding no fit seat, the lifelesse corse it left.

It left ; but that same soule which therein dwelt 22
Streight entring into Triamond him fild
With double life and griefe ; which when he felt,
As one whose inner parts had bene ythrild
With point of steele that close his hartbloud spild,
He lightly lept out of his place of rest,
And rushing forth into the emptie field,
Against Cambello fiercely him addrest ;
Who, him affronting soone, to fight was readie prest.

Well mote ye wonder how that noble Knight, 23
After he had so often wounded beene,
Could stand on foot now to renew the fight :
But had ye then him forth advauncing seene,
Some newborne wight ye would him surely weene ;
So fresh he seemed and so fierce in sight :
Like as a Snake, whom wearie winters teene
Hath worne to nought, now feeling sommers might,
Casts off his ragged skin and freshly doth him dight.

All was through vertue of the ring he wore ; 24
The which not onely did not from him let
One drop of bloud to fall, but did restore
His weakned powers, and dulled spirits whet,
Through working of the stone therein yset.
Else how could one of equall might with most,
Against so many no lesse mightie met,
Once thinke to match three such on equall cost,
Three such as able were to match a puissant host ?

Yet nought thereof was Triamond adredde, 25
Ne desperate of glorious victorie ;
But sharply him assayld, and sore bestedde
With heapes of strokes, which he at him let flie
As thicke as hayle forth poured from the skie :
He stroke, he soust, he foynd, he hewd, he lasht,
And did his yron brond so fast applie,
That from the same the fierie sparkles flasht,
As fast as water-sprinkles gainst a rocke are dasht.

Much was Cambello daunted with his blowes : 26
So thicke they fell, and forcibly were sent,
That he was forst from daunger of the throwes
Backe to retire, and somewhat to relent,
Till th' heat of his fierce furie he had spent ;
Which when for want of breath gan to abate,
He then afresh with new encouragement
Did him assayle, and mightily amate,
As fast as forward erst now backward to retrate.

Like as the tide, that comes fro th' Ocean mayne, 27
Flowes up the Shenan with contrarie forse,
And overruling him in his owne rayne,
Drives backe the current of his kindly course,
And makes it seeme to have some other sourse ;
But when the floud is spent, then backe againe,
His borrowed waters forst to redisbourse,
He sends the sea his owne with double gaine,
And tribute eke withall, as to his Soveraine.

Thus did the battell varie to and fro, 28
With diverse fortune doubtfull to be deemed :
Now this the better had, now had his fo ;
Then he halfe vanquisht, then the other seemed ;
Yet victors both them selves alwayes esteemed :
And all the while the disentrayled blood
Adowne their sides like litle rivers stremed,
That with the wasting of his vitall flood,
Sir Triamond at last full faint and feeble stood.

But Cambell still more strong and greater grew, 29
Ne felt his blood to wast, ne powres emperisht,
Through that rings vertue, that with vigour new
Still, when as he enfeebled was, him cherisht,
And all his wounds and all his bruises guarisht :
Like as a withered tree, through husbands toyle,
Is often seene full freshly to have florisht,
And fruitfull apples to have borne awhile,
As fresh as when it first was planted in the soyle.

Through which advantage in his strength he rose, 30
And smote the other with so wondrous might,
That through the seame which did his hauberk close
Into his throate and life it pierced quight,
That downe he fell as dead in all mens sight :
Yet dead he was not ; yet he sure did die,
As all men do that lose the living spright.
So did one soule out of his bodie flie
Unto her native home from mortall miserie.

But nathelesse, whilst all the lookers on 31
Him dead behight, as he to all appeard,
All unawares he started up anon,
As one that had out of a dreame bene reard,
And fresh assayld his foe ; who halfe affeard
Of th' uncouth sight, as he some ghost had seene,
Stood still amaz'd holding his idle sweard ;
Till having often by him stricken beene,
He forced was to strike and save himselfe from teene.

Yet from thenceforth more warily he fought, 32
As one in feare the Stygian gods t' offend,
Ne followd on so fast, but rather sought
Him selfe to save, and daunger to defend,
Then life and labour both in vaine to spend.
Which Triamond perceiving weened sure
He gan to faint toward the battels end,
And that he should not long on foote endure,
A signe which did to him the victorie assure.

Whereof full blith eftsoones his mightie hand 33
He heav'd on high, in mind with that same blow
To make an end of all that did withstand :
Which Cambell seeing come was nothing slow
Him selfe to save from that so deadly throw ;
And at that instant reaching forth his sweard
Close underneath his shield, that scarce did show,
Stroke him, as he his hand to strike upreard,
In th' arm-pit full, that through both sides the wound
appeared.

Yet still that direfull stroke kept on his way, 34
And, falling heavie on Cambelloes crest,
Strooke him so hugely that in swowne he lay,
And in his head an hideous wound imprest :
And sure, had it not happily found rest
Upon the brim of his brode plated shield,
It would have cleft his braine downe to his brest.
So both at once fell dead upon the field,
And each to other seemd the victorie to yield.

Which when as all the lookers on beheld, 35
They weened sure the warre was at an end ;
And Judges rose, and Marshals of the field
Broke up the listes, their armes away to rend ;
And Canacee gan wayle her dearest frend.
All suddenly they both upstart light,
The one out of the swownd which him did blend,
The other breathing now another spright ;
And fiercely each assayling gan afresh to fight.

Long while they then continued in that wize, 36
As if but then the battell had begonne :
Strokes, wounds, wards, weapons, all they did despise;
Ne either car'd to ward, or perill shonne,
Desirous both to have the battell donne ;
Ne either cared life to save or spill,
Ne which of them did winne, ne which were wonne :
So wearie both of fighting had their fill,
That life it selfe seemd loathsome, and long safetie ill.

Whilst thus the case in doubtfull ballance hong, 37
Unsure to whether side it would incline,
And all mens eyes and hearts, which there among
Stood gazing, filled were with rufull tine
And secret feare to see their fatall fine,
All suddenly they heard a troublous noyes,
That seemd some perilous tumult to desine,
Confus'd with womens cries and shouts of boyes,
Such as the troubled Theatres oftimes annoyes.

Thereat the Champions both stood still a space, 38
To weeten what that sudden clamour ment :
Lo ! where they spyde with speedie whirling pace
One in a charet of straunge furniment
Towards them driving, like a storme out sent.
The charet decked was in wondrous wize
With gold and many a gorgeous ornament,
After the Persian Monarks antique guize,
Such as the maker selfe could best by art devise.

And drawne it was (that wonder is to tell) 39
Of two grim lyons, taken from the wood,
In which their powre all others did excell,
Now made forget their former cruell mood,
T'obey their riders hest, as seemed good :
And therein sate a Ladie, passing faire
And bright, that seemed borne of Angels brood ;
And with her beautie bountie did compare,
Whether of them in her should have the greater share.

Thereto she learned was in Magicke leare, 40
And all the artes that subtill wits discover,
Having therein bene trained many a yeare,
And well instructed by the Fay her mother,
That in the same she farre exceld all other :
Who, understanding by her mightie art
Of th' evill plight in which her dearest brother
Now stood, came forth in hast to take his part,
And pacifie the strife which causd so deadly smart.

And, as she passed through th' unruly preace 41
Of people thronging thicke her to behold,
Her angrie teame breaking their bonds of peace
Great heapes of them, like sheepe in narrow fold,
For hast did over-runne in dust enrould ;
That thorough rude confusion of the rout,
Some fearing shriekt, some being harmed hould,
Some laught for sport, some did for wonder shout,
And some, that would seeme wise, their wonder turnd
to dout.

In her right hand a rod of peace shee bore, 42
About the which two Serpents weren wound,
Entrayled mutually in lovely lore,
And by the tailes together firmly bound,
And both were with one olive garland crownd ;
Like to the rod which Maias sonne doth wield,
Wherewith the hellish fiends he doth confound :
And in her other hand a cup she hild,
The which was with Nepenthe to the brim upfild.

Nepenthe is a drinck of soverayne grace, 43
Devized by the Gods for to asswage
Harts grief, and bitter gall away to chace
Which stirs up anguish and contentious rage :
In stead thereof sweet peace and quiet age
It doth establish in the troubled mynd.
Few men, but such as sober are and sage,
Are by the Gods to drinck thereof assynd ;
But such as drinck eternall happinesse do fynd.

Such famous men, such worthies of the earth, 44
As Jove will have advaunced to the skie,
And there made gods, though borne of mortall berth,
For their high merits and great dignitie,
Are wont, before they may to heaven flie,
To drinke hereof; whereby all cares forepast
Are washt away quite from their memorie:
So did those olde Heroes hereof taste,
Before that they in blisse amongst the Gods were plaste.

Much more of price, and of more gracious powre, 45
Is this, then that same water of Ardenne,
The which Rinaldo drunck in happie howre,
Described by that famous Tuscan penne:
For that had might to change the hearts of men
Fro love to hate, a change of evill choise;
But this doth hatred make in love to brenne,
And heavy heart with comfort doth rejoyce.
Who would not to this vertue rather yeeld his voice?

As last arriving by the listes side, 46
Shee with her rod did softly smite the raile,
Which straight flew ope and gave her way to ride.
Eftsoones out of her Coch she gan availe,
And pacing fairely forth did bid all haile
First to her brother, whom she loved deare,
That so to see him made her heart to quaille;
And next to Cambell, whose sad ruefull cheare
Made her to change her hew, and hidden love t'appeare.

They lightly her requit, (for small delight 47
They had as then her long to entertaine)
And eft them turned both againe to fight:
Which when she saw, downe on the bloody plaine
Her selfe she threw, and teares gan shed amaine;
Amongst her teares immixing prayers meeke,
And with her prayers reasons, to restraine
From blouddy strife; and blessed peace to seeke,
By all that unto them was deare, did them beseeke.

But when as all might nought with them prevaile, 48
Shee smote them lightly with her powrefull wand :
Then suddenly, as if their hearts did faile,
Their wrathfull blades downe fell out of their hand,
And they, like men astonisht, still did stand.
Thus whilest their minds were doubtfully distraught,
And mighty spirites bound with mightier band,
Her golden cup to them for drinke she raught,
Whereof, full glad for thirst, ech drunk an hartie
draught.

Of which so soone as they once tasted had, 49
Wonder it is that sudden change to see :
Instead of strokes, each other kissed glad,
And lovely haulst, from feare of treason free,
And plighted hands for ever friends to be.
When all men saw this sudden change of things,
So mortall foes so friendly to agree,
For passing joy, which so great marvaile brings,
They all gan shout aloud, that all the heaven rings.

All which when gentle Canacee beheld, 50
In hast she from her lofty chaire descended,
To weet what sudden tidings was befel'd :
Where when she saw that cruell war so ended,
And deadly foes so faithfully affrended,
In lovely wise she gan that Lady greet,
Which had so great dismay so well amended ;
And entertaining her with curt'sies meet,
Profest to her true friendship and affection sweet.

Thus when they all accorded goodly were, 51
The trumpets sounded, and they all arose,
Thence* to depart with glee and gladsome chere.
Those warlike champions both together chose
Homeward to march, themselves there to repose ;
And wise Cambina, taking by her side
Faire Canacee as fresh as morning rose,
Unto her Coch remounting, home did ride,
Admir'd of all the people and much glorifide.

Where making joyous feast their daies they spent 52
In perfect love, devoid of hatefull strife,
Allide with bands of mutuall complement;
For Triamond had Canacee to wife,
With whom he ledd a long and happie life;
And Cambel tooke Cambina to his fere,
The which as life were to each other liefe.
So all alike did love, and loved were,
That since their days such lovers were not found
elswere.



CANTO IV.

*Satyrane makes a Turneyment
For love of Florimell:
Britomart winnes the prize from all,
And Artegall doth quell.*

T often fals, (as here it earst befell) 1
That mortall foes doe turne to faithfull
frends,

And friends profest are chaungd to foemen fell:
The cause of both of both their minds depends,
And th' end of both likewise of both their ends;
For enmitie, that of no ill proceeds
But of occasion, with th' occasion ends,
And friendship, which a faint affection breeds
Without regard of good, dyes like ill grounded seeds.

That well (me seemes) appeares by that of late 2
Twixt Cambell and Sir Triamond befell;
As als by this; that now a new debate
Stird up twixt Blandamour and Paridell,
The which by course befals me here to tell:
Who, having those two other Knights espide
Marching afore, as ye remember well,
Sent forth their Squire to have them both descride,
And eke those masked Ladies riding them beside.

Who backe returning told, as he had seene, 3
That they were doughtie knights of dreaded name,
And those two Ladies their two loves unseene;
And therefore wisht them without blot or blame
To let them passe at will, for dread of shame.
But Blandamour full of vainglorious spright,
And rather stird by his discordfull Dame,
Upon them gladly would have prov'd his might,
But that he yet was sore of his late lucklesse fight.

Yet nigh approching he them fowle bespake, 4
Disgracing them, him selfe thereby to grace,
As was his wont ; so weening way to make
To Ladies love whereso he came in place,
And with lewd termes their lovers to deface :
Whose sharpe provokement them incenst so sore,
That both were bent t' avenge his usage base,
And gan their shields addresse them selves afore ;
For evill deedes may better then bad words be bore.

But faire Cambina with perswasions myld 5
Did mitigate the fiercenesse of their mode,
That for the present they were reconcyl'd,
And gan to treat of deeds of armes abroad,
And strange adventures, all the way they rode :
Amongst the which they told, as then befell,
Of that great turney which was blazed brode,
For that rich girdle of faire Florimell,
The prize of her which did in beautie most excell.

To which folke-mote they all with one consent, 6
Sith each of them his Ladie had him by,
Whose beautie each of them thought excellent
Agreed to travell, and their fortunes try.
So as they passed forth they did espy
One in bright armes with ready speare in rest,
That toward them his course seem'd to apply ;
Gainst whom Sir Paridell himselfe addrest,
Him weening, ere he nigh approcht, to have repress.

Which th' other seeing gan his course relent, 7
And vaunted speare eftsoones to disadvaunce,
As if he naught but peace and pleasure ment,
Now falne into their fellowship by chance ;
Whereat they shewed curteous countenance.
So as he rode with them accompanide,
His roving eie did on the Lady glaunce
Which Blandamour had riding by his side :
Whom sure he weend that he som wher tofore had eide.

It was to weete that snowy Florimell, 8
Which Ferrau late from Braggadochio wonne;
Whom he now seeing, her remembred well,
How having reft her from the witches sonne,
He soone her lost: wherefore he now begunne
To challenge her anew, as his owne prize,
Whom formerly he had in battell wonne,
And proffer made by force her to reprize;
Which scornefull offer Blandamour gan soone despize;

And said, "Sir Knight, sith ye this Lady clame, 9
Whom he that hath were loth to lose so light,
(For so to lose a Lady were great shame)
Yee shall her winne, as I have done, in fight:
And lo! shee shall be placed here in sight,
Together with this Hag beside her set,
That who so winnes her may her have by right;
But he shall have the Hag that is ybet,
And with her alwaies ride, till he another get."

That offer pleased all the company: 10
So Florimell with Ate forth was brought,
At which they all gan laugh full merrily;
But Braggadochio said, he never thought
For such an Hag, that seemed worst then nought,
His person to emperill so in fight:
But if to match that Lady they had sought
Another like, that were like faire and bright,
His life he then would spend to justifie his right.

At which his vaine excuse they all gan smile, 11
As scorning his unmanly cowardize;
And Florimell him fowly gan revile,
That for her sake refus'd to enterprize
The battell, offred in so knightly wize:
And Ate eke provokt him privily
With love of her, and shame of such mesprize,
But nought he car'd for friend or enemy;
For in base mind nor friendship dwels nor enmity.

But Cambell thus did shut up all in jest: 12

“Brave Knights and Ladies, certes, ye doe wrong
To stirre up strife when most us needeth rest,
That we may us reserve both fresh and strong
Against the Turnement which is not long,
When who so list to fight may fight his fill:
Till then your challenges ye may prolong;
And then it shall be tried, if ye will,
Whether shall have the Hag, or hold the Lady still.”

They all agreed: so, turning all to game 13

And pleasaunt bord, they past forth on their way;
And all that while, where so they rode or came,
That masked Mock-knight was their sport and play.
Till that at length, upon th’ appointed day
Unto the place of turneyment they came;
Where they before them found in fresh aray
Manie a brave knight and manie a daintie dame,
Assembled for to get the honour of that game.

There this faire crewe arriving did divide 14

Them selves asunder: Blandamour with those
Of his on th’ one, the rest on th’ other side:
But boastful Braggadochio rather chose,
For glorie vaine, their fellowship to lose,
That men on him the more might gaze alone.
The rest them selves in troupes did else dispose,
Like as it seemed best to every one:
The knights in couples marcht with ladies linckt attone.

Then first of all forth came Sir Satyrane, 15

Bearing that precious relicke in an arke
Of gold, that bad eyes might it not prophane;
Which drawing softly forth out of the darke,
He open shewd, that all men it mote marke:
A gorgeous girdle, curiously embost
With pearle and precious stone, worth many a marke;
Yet did the workmanship farre passe the cost:
It was the same which lately Florimel had lost.

The same aloft he hung in open vew, 16
To be the prize of beautie and of might ;
The which, eftsoones discovered, to it drew
The eyes of all, allur'd with close delight,
And hearts quite robbed with so glorious sight,
That all men threw out voves and wishes vaine.
Thrise happie Ladie, and thrise happie knight,
Them seemd that could so goodly riches gaine,
So worthie of the perill, worthy of the paine.

Then tooke the bold Sir Satyrane in hand 17
An huge great speare, such as he wont to wield,
And vauncing forth from all the other band
Of knights addrest his maiden-headed shield,
Shewing him selfe all ready for the field.
Gainst whom there singled from the other side
A Painim knight that well in armes was skild,
And had in many a battell oft bene tride,
Hight Bruncheval the bold, who fiersly forth did ride.

So furiously they both together met, 18
That neither could the others force sustaine.
As two fierce Buls, that strive the rule to get
Of all the heard, meete with so hideous maine,
That both rebutted tumble on the plaine:
So these two champions to the ground were feld
Where in a maze they both did long remaine,
And in their hands their idle troncheons held,
Which neither able were to wag, or once to weld.

Which when the noble Ferramont espide, 19
He pricked forth in ayd of Satyran ;
And him against Sir Blandamour did ride
With all the strength and stifnesse that he can :
But the more strong and stiffely that he ran,
So much more sorely to the ground he fell,
That on an heape were tumbled horse and man.
Unto whose rescue forth rode Paridell ;
But him likewise with that same speare heeke did quell.

Which Braggadocchio seeing had no will 20
To hasten greatly to his parties ayd,
Albee his turne were next; but stood there still,
As one that seemed doubtfull or dismayd:
But Triamond, halfe wroth to see him staid,
Sternly stept forth, and raught away his speare,
With which so sore he Ferramont assaid,
That horse and man to ground he quite did beare,
That neither could in hast themselves againe upreare.

Which to avenge Sir Devon him did dight, 21
But with no better fortune then the rest;
For him likewise he quickly downe did smight:
And after him Sir Douglas him address;
And after him Sir Palimord forth prest:
But none of them against his strokes could stand;
But, all the more, the more his praise increst,
For either they were left uppon the land,
Or went away sore wounded of his haplesse hand.

And now by this Sir Satyrane abraid 22
Out of the swowne, in which too long he lay;
And looking round about, like one dismaid,
When as he saw the mercilesse affray
Which doughty Triamond had wrought that day
Unto the noble Knights of Maidenhead,
His mighty heart did almost rend in tway
For very gall, that rather wholly dead
Himselfe he wisht have beene then in so bad a stead.

Eftsoones he gan to gather up around 23
His weapons which lay scattered all abroad,
And, as it fell, his steed he ready found:
On whom remounting fiercely forth he rode,
Like sparke of fire that from the andvile glode,
There where he saw the valiant Triamond
Chasing, and laying on them heavy lode,
That none his force were able to withstond,
So dreadfull were his strokes, so deadly was his hond.

With that, at him his beam-like speare he aimed, 24
And thereto all his power and might applide :
The wicked steele, for mischiefe first ordained,
And having now misfortune got for guide,
Staid not till it arrived in his side,
And therein made a very griesly wound,
That streames of blood his armour all bedide.
Much was he daunted with that direfull stound,
That scarce he him upheld from falling in a sound.

Yet, as he might, himselfe he soft withdrew 25
Out of the field, that none perceiv'd it plaine.
Then gan the part of Chalers anew
To range the field, and victorlike to raine,
That none against them battell durst maintaine :
By that the gloomy evening on them fell,
That forced them from fighting to refraine,
And trumpets sound to cease did them compell.
So Satyrane that day was judg'd to beare the bell.

The morrow next the Turney gan anew ; 26
And with the first the hardy Satyrane
Appear'd in place, with all his noble crew.
On th' other side full many a warlike swaine
Assembled were, that glorious prize to gaine :
But mongst them all was not Sir Triamond ;
Unable he new battell to darraine,
Through grievance of his late received wound,
That doubly did him grieve when so himselfe he found.

Which Cambell seeing, though he could not salve, 27
Ne done undoe, yet, for to salve his name
And purchase honour in his friends behalve,
This goodly counterfesaunce he did frame :
The shield and armes, well knowne to be the same
Which Triamond had worne, unwares to wight,
And to his friend unwist, for doubt of blame
If he misdid, he on himselfe did dight, [fight.
That none could him discern ; and so went forth to

There Satyrane Lord of the field he found, 28
Triumphing in great joy and jollity,
Gainst whom none able was to stand on ground;
That much he gan his glorie to envy,
And cast t' avenge his friends indignity.
A mightie speare eftsoones at him he bent;
Who, seeing him come on so furiously,
Met him mid-way with equall hardiment,
That forcibly to ground they both together went.

They up againe them selves can lightly reare, 29
And to their tryed swords them selves betake;
With which they wrought such wondrous marvels
That all the rest it did amazed make, [there,
Ne any dar'd their perill to partake;
Now cuffling close, now chacing to and fro,
Now hurtling round advantage for to take:
As two wild Boares together grapling go,
Chaufing and foming choler each against his fo.

So as they courst, and turneyd here and theare, 30
It chaunst Sir Satyrane his steed at last,
Whether through foundring or through sodein feare,
To stumble, that his rider nigh he cast;
Which vauntage Cambell did pursue so fast,
That, ere him selfe he had recovered well,
So sore he sowst him on the compast creast,
That forced him to leave his loftie sell,
And rudely tumbling downe under his horse feete fell.

Lightly Cambello leapt downe from his steed 31
For to have rent his shield and armes away,
That whylome wont to be the victors meed;
When all unwares he felt an hideous sway
Of many swords that lode on him did lay.
An hundred knights had him enclosed round,
To rescue Satyrane out of his pray,
All which at once huge strokes on him did pound,
In hope to take him prisoner where hestood on ground.

He with their multitude was nought dismayd, 32
But with stout courage turnd upon them all,
And with his brondiron round about him layd;
Of which he dealt large almes, as did befall.
Like as a Lion, that by chaunce doth fall
Into the hunters toile, doth rage and rore,
In royall heart, disdainig to be thrall:
But all in vaine; for what might one do more?
They have him taken captive, though it grieve him sore.

Whereof when newes to Triamond was brought 33
There as he lay, his wound he soone forgot,
And starting up streight for his armour sought:
In vaine he sought, for there he found it not;
Cambello it away before had got.
Cambelloes armes therefore he on him threw,
And lightly issewd forth to take his lot.
There he in troupe found all that warlike crew,
Leading his friend away, full sorie to his vew.

Into the thickest of that knightly preasse 34
He thrust, and smote downe all that was betweene,
Caried with fervent zeale; ne did he ceasse,
Till that he came where he had Cambell seene
Like captive thral two other Knights atweene:
There he amongst them cruell havoocke makes,
That they which lead him soone enforced beene
To let him loose to save their proper stakes;
Who, being freed, from one a weapon fiercely takes.

With that he drives at them with dreadfull might, 35
Both in remembrance of his friends late harme,
And in revengement of his owne despight:
So both together give a new allarme,
As if but now the battell waxed warme.
As when two greedy Wolves doe breake by force
Into an heard, farre from the husband farme,
They spoile and ravine without all remorse:
So did these two through all the field their foes enforce.

Fiercely they followd on their bolde emprize, 36
Till trumpets sound did warne them all to rest;
Then all with one consent did yeeld the prize
To Triamond and Cambell as the best:
But Triamond to Cambell it relest,
And Cambell it to Triamond transferd,
Each labouring t' advance the others gest,
And make his praise before his owne preferd:
So that the doome was to another day differd.

The last day came, when all those knightes againe 37
Assembled were their deedes of armes to shew.
Full many deedes that day were shewed plaine;
But Satyrane, bove all the other crew,
His wondrous worth declared in all mens view,
For from the first he to the last endured;
And though some while Fortune from him withdrew,
Yet evermore his honour he recured,
And with unwearied powre his party still assured.

Ne was there Knight that ever thought of armes, 38
But that his utmost prowesse there made knowen:
That, by their many wounds and carelesse harmes,
By shivered speares and swords all under strowen,
By scattered shields, was easie to be shown.
There might ye see loose steeds at randon ronne,
Whose lucklesse riders late were overthrowen;
And squiers make hast to helpe their Lords fordonne:
But still the Knights of Maidenhead the better wonne;

Till that there entered on the other side 39
A straunger knight, from whence no man could reed,
In quynt disguise full hard to be describe;
For all his armour was like salvage weed
With woody mosse bedight, and all his steed
With oaken leaves attrapt, that seemed fit
For salvage wight: and thereto well agreed
His word, which on his ragged shield was writ,
Salvagesse sans finesse, shewing secret wit.

He, at his first incomming, charg'd his spere 40
At him that first appeared in his sight;
That was to weet the stout Sir Sangliere,
Who well was knowen to be a valiant Knight,
Approved oft in many a perlous fight.
Him at the first encounter downe he smote,
And overbore beyond his crouper quight;
And after him another Knight, that hote
Sir Brianor, so sore that none him life behote.

Then, ere his hand he reard, he overthrew 41
Seven Knights, one after other as they came:
And, when his speare was brust, his sword he drew,
The instrument of wrath, and with the same
Far'd like a lyon in his bloodie game,
Hewing and slashing shields and helmets bright,
And beating downe what ever nigh him came,
That every one gan shun his dreadfull sight,
No lesse then death it selfe, in daungerous affright.

Much wondred all men what or whence he came, 42
That did amongst the troupes so tyrannize,
And each of other gan inquire his name;
But when they could not learne it by no wize,
Most answerable to his wyld disguise
It seemed him to terme the salvage knight:
But certes his right name was otherwise,
Though knowne to few that Arthegall he hight,
The doughtiest knight that liv'd that day, and most of
might.

Thus was Sir Satyrane with all his band 43
By his sole manhood and atchievement stout
Dismay'd, that none of them in field durst stand,
But beaten were and chased all about.
So he continued all that day throughout,
Till evening that the Sunne gan downward bend:
Then rushed forth out of the thickest rout
A stranger knight, that did his glorie shend.
So nought may be esteemed happie till the end.

He at his entrance charg'd his powrefull speare 44
At Artegall, in middest of his pryde,
And therewith smote him on his Umbriere
So sore, that tombling backe he downe did slyde
Over his horses taile above a stryde;
Whence litle lust he had to rise againe:
Which Cambell seeing much the same envyde,
And ran at him with all his might and maine;
But shortly was likewise seene lying on the plaine.

Whereat full inly wroth was Triamond, 45
And cast t' evenge the shame doen to his freend;
But by his friend himselfe eke soone he fond
In no lesse neede of helpe then him, he weend.
All which when Blandamour from end to end
Beheld, he woxe therewith displeased sore,
And thought in mind it shortly to amend:
His speare he feutred, and at him it bore,
But with no better fortune then the rest afore.

Full many others at him likewise ran, 46
But all of them likewise dismounted were;
Ne certes wonder, for no powre of man
Could bide the force of that enchaunted speare,
The which this famous Britomart did beare;
With which she wondrous deeds of arms atchieved
And overthrew what ever came her neare,
That all those stranger knights full sore agrieved,
And that late weaker band of challengers relieved.

Like as in sommers day, when raging heat 47
Doth burne the earth and boyled rivers drie,
That all brute beasts, forst to refrain fro meat,
Doe hunt for shade, where shrowded they may lie,
And, missing it, faine from themselves to flie;
All travellers tormented are with paine:
A watry cloud doth overcast the skie,
And poureth forth a sudden shoure of raine,
That all the wretched world recomforteth againe.

So did the warlike Britomart restore 48
The prize to knights of Maydenhead that day,
Which else was like to have bene lost, and bore
The prayse of prowesse from them all away.
Then shrilling trumpets loudly gan to bray,
And bad them leave their labours and long toyle
To joyous feast and other gentle play,
Where beauties prize shold win that pretious spoyle:
Where I with sound of trompe will also rest awhyle.



CANTO V.

*The Ladies for the girdle strive
of famous Florimell:
Scudamour, comming to Cares House,
doth sleepe from him expell.*

IT hath bene through all ages ever seene, 1
That with the praise of armes and chevalrie
The prize of beautiestill hath joyned beene;
And that for reasons speciall privitee,
For either doth on other much relie:
For he, me seemes, most fit the faire to serve,
That can her best defend from villenie;
And she most fit his service doth deserve,
That fairest is, and from her faith will never swerve.

So fitly now here commeth next in place, 2
After the prooffe of prowesse ended well,
The controverse of beauties soveraine grace;
In which to her that doth the most excell,
Shall fall the girdle of faire Florimell;
That many wish to win for glorie vaine,
And not for vertuous use, which some doe tell
That glorious belt did in it selfe containe,
Which Ladies ought to love, and seeke for to obtaine.

That girdle gave the vertue of chast love, 3
And wivehood true, to all that did it beare;
But whosoever contrarie doth prove,
Might not the same about her middle weare,
But it would loose, or else a sunder teare.
Whilome it was (as Faeries wont report)
Dame Venus girdle, by her steemed deare
What time she usd to live in wively sort,
But layd aside when so she usd her looser sport.

Her husband Vulcan whylome for her sake, 4
When first he loved her with heart entire,
This pretious ornament, they say, did make,
And wrought in Lemno with unquenched fire;
And afterwards did for her loves first hire
Give it to her, for ever to remaine,
Therewith to bind lascivious desire,
And loose affections streightly to restraine;
Which vertue it for ever after did retaine.

The same one day, when she her selfe disposd 5
To visite her beloved Paramoure,
The God of warre, she from her middle loosd,
And left behind her in her secret bowre
On Acidalian mount, where many an howre
She with the pleasant Graces wont to play.
There Florimell, in her first ages flowre,
Was fostered by those Graces, (as they say) [away.
And brought with her from thence that goodly belt

That goodly belt was Cestus hight by name, 6
And as her life by her esteemed deare:
No wonder then, if that to winne the same
So many Ladies sought, as shall appeare;
For pearelesse she was thought that did it beare.
And now by this their feast all being ended,
The judges, which thereto selected were,
Into the Martian field adowne descended [tended.
To deeme this doutfull case, for which they all con-

But first was question made, which of those Knights
That lately turneyd had the wager wonne?
There was it judged, by those worthie wights,
That Satyrane the first day best had donne;
For he last ended, having first begonne.
The second was to Triamond behight,
For that he sav'd the victour from fordonne:
For Cambell victour was in all mens sight,
Till by mishap he in his foemens hand did light.

The third dayes prize unto that straunger Knight, 8
Whom all men term'd Knight of the Hebene speare,
To Britomart was given by good right;
For that with puissant stroke she downe did beare
The Salvage Knight that victour was whileare,
And all the rest which had the best afore,
And to the last unconquer'd did appeare;
For last is deemed best. To her therefore
The fayrest Ladie was adjudgd for Paramore.

But thereat greatly grudged Arthegall, 9
And much repynd, that both of victors meede
And eke of honour she did him forestall:
Yet mote he not withstand what was decreede;
But inly thought of that despightfull deede
Fit time t' awaite avenged for to bee.
This being ended thus, and all agreed,
Then next ensew'd the Paragon to see
Of beauties praise, and yeeld the fayrest her due fee.

Then first Cambello brought into their view 10
His faire Cambina, covered with a veale;
Which, being once withdrawne, most perfect hew
And passing beautie did eftsoones reveale,
That able was weake harts away to steale.
Next did Sir Triamond unto their sight
The face of his deare Canacee unheale;
Whose beauties beame eftsoones did shine so bright,
That daz'd the eyes of all as with exceeding light.

And after her did Paridell produce 11
His false Duessa, that she might be seene;
Who with her forged beautie did seduce
The hearts of some that fairest her did weene,
As diverse wits affected divers beene.
Then did Sir Ferramont unto them shew
His Lucida, that was full faire and sheene:
And after these an hundred Ladies moe
Appear'd in place, the which each other did outgoe.

All which who so dare thinke for to enchace, 12
Him needeth sure a golden pen, I weene,
To tell the feature of each goodly face ;
For, since the day that they created beene,
So many heavenly faces were not seene
Assembled in one place : ne he that thought
For Chian folke to pourtraict beauties Queene,
By view of all the fairest to him brought,
So many faire did see as here he might have sought.

At last, the most redoubted Britonesse 13
Her lovely Amoret did open shew ;
Whose face, discovered, plainly did expresse
The heavenly pourtraict of bright Angels hew.
Well weened all, which her that time did vew,
That she should surely beare the bell away ;
Till Blandamour, who thought he had the trew
And very Florimell, did her display,
The sight of whom once seene did all the rest dismay.

For all afore that seemed fayre and bright, 14
Now base and contemptible did appeare,
Compar'd to her that shone as Phebes light
Amongst the lesser starres in evening cleare.
All that her saw with wonder ravisht weare,
And weend no mortall creature she should bee,
But some celestiall shape that flesh did beare :
Yet all were glad there Florimell to see,
Yet thought that Florimell was not so faire as shee.

As guilefull Goldsmith that by secret skill 15
With golden foyle doth finely over spred
Some baser metall, which commend he will
Unto the vulgar for good gold insted,
He much more goodly glosse thereon doth shed
To hide his falshood, then if it were trew :
So hard this Idole was to be ared,
That Florimell her selfe in all mens vew
She seem'd to passe. So forged things do fairest shew.

Then was that golden belt by doome of all 16
Graunted to her, as to the fayrest Dame.
Which being brought, about her middle small
They thought to gird, as best it her became ;
But by no meanes they could it thereto frame :
For, ever as they fastned it, it loos'd
And fell away, as feeling secret blame.
Full oft about her wast she it enclos'd,
And it as oft was from about her wast disclos'd :

That all men wondred at the uncouth sight, 17
And each one thought as to their fancies came :
But she her selfe did thinke it doen for spight,
And touched was with secret wrath and shame
Therewith, as thing deviz'd her to defame.
Then, many other Ladies likewise tride
About their tender loynes to knit the same ;
But it would not on none of them abide,
But when they thought it fast, eftsoones it was untide.

Which when that scornefull Squire of Dames did vew,
He lowdly gan to laugh, and thus to jest :
“ Alas ! for pittie that so faire a crew,
As like can not be seene from East to West,
Cannot find one this girdle to invest.
Fie on the man that did it first invent
To shame us all with this *Ungirt unblest* !
Let never Ladie to his love assent,
That hath this day so many so unmanly shent.”

Thereat all Knights gan laugh, and Ladies lowre, 19
Till that at last the gentle Amoret
Likewise assayd to prove that girdles powre ;
And, having it about her middle set,
Did find it fit withouten breach or let :
Whereat the rest gan greatly to envie,
But Florimell exceedingly did fret,
And snatching from her hand halfe angrily
The belt againe, about her bodie gan it tie.

Yet nathemore would it her bodie fit; 20
Yet nathelesse to her, as her dew right,
It yielded was by them that judged it;
And she her selfe adjudged to the Knight
That bore the Hebene speare, as wonne in fight.
But Britomart would not thereto assent,
Ne her owne Amoret forgoe so light
For that strange Dame, whose beauties wonderment
She lesse esteem'd, then th' others vertuous govern-
ment.

Whom when the rest did see her to refuse, 21
They were full glad, in hope themselves to get her:
Yet at her choice they all did greatly muse,
But, after that, the judges did arret her
Unto the second best that lov'd her better;
That was the Salvage Knight: but he was gone,
In great displeasure that he could not get her.
Then was she judged Triamond his one;
But Triamond lov'd Canacee, and other none.

Tho unto Satyran she was adjudged, 22
Who was right glad to gaine so goodly meed;
But Blandamour thereat full greatly grudged,
And litle prays'd his labours evill speed,
That for to winne the saddle lost the steed.
Ne lesse thereat did Paridell complaine,
And thought t'appeale from that which was decreed
To single combat with Sir Satyrane:
Thereto him Ate stird, new discord to maintaine.

And eke, with these, full many other Knights 23
She through her wicked working did incense
Her to demaund and chalenge as their rights,
Deserved for their perils recompense.
Amongst the rest, with boastfull vaine pretense,
Stept Braggadochio forth, and as his thrall
Her claym'd, by him in battell wonne long sens:
Whereto her selfe he did to witnesse call;
Who, being askt, accordingly confessed all.

Thereat exceeding wroth was Satyran, 24
And wroth with Satyran was Blandamour,
And wroth with Blandamour was Erivan,
And at them both Sir Paridell did loure.
So all together stird up strifull stoure,
And readie were new battell to darraine:
Each one profest to be her paramoure,
And vow'd with speare and shield it to maintaine;
Ne Judges powre, ne reasons rule, mote them restraine.

Which troublous stirre when Satyrane aviz'd, 25
He gan to cast how to appease the same,
And to accord them all this meanes devis'd.
First in the midst to set that fayrest Dame,
To whom each one his chalenge should disclame,
And he himselfe his right would eke releasse:
Then, looke to whom she voluntarie came,
He should without disturbance her possesse.
Sweete is the love that comes alone with willingnesse.

They all agreed; and then that snowy Mayd 26
Was in the middest plast among them all:
All on her gazing wisht, and vowd, and prayd,
And to the Queene of beautie close did call,
That she unto their portion might befall.
Then, when she long had lookt upon each one,
As though she wished to have pleasd them all,
At last to Braggadochio selfe alone
She came of her accord, in spight of all his fone.

Which when they all beheld, they chaft, and rag'd,
And woxe nigh mad for very harts despight,
That from revenge their willes they scarce asswag'd:
Some thought from him her to have reft by might;
Some proffer made with him for her to fight;
But he nought car'd for all that they could say,
For he their words as wind esteemed light:
Yet not fit place he thought it there to stay,
But secretly from thence that night her bore away.

They which remaynd, so soone as they perceiv'd
That she was gone, departed thence with speed,
And follow'd them, in mind her to have reav'd
From wight unworthie of so noble meed.
In which poursuit how each one did succcede,
Shall else be told in order, as it fell:
But now of Britomart it here doth neede
The hard adventures and strange haps to tell,
Since with the rest she went not after Florimell.

For soone as she them saw to discord set, 29
Her list no longer in that place abide;
But taking with her lovely Amoret,
Upon her first adventure forth did ride,
To seeke her lov'd, making blind love her guide.
Unluckie Mayd, to seek heremie!
Unluckie Mayd, to seeke him farre and wide,
Whom, when he was unto her selfe most nie,
She through his late disguizement could him not
descrie!

So much the more her griefe, the more her toyle: 30
Yet neither toyle nor griefe she once did spare,
In seeking him that should her paine assoyle;
Whereto great comfort in her sad misfare
Was Amoret, companion of her care,
Who likewise sought her lover long miswent,
The gentle Scudamour, whose heart whileare
That stryfull hag with gealous discontent
Had fild, that he to fell reveng was fully bent;

Bent to revenge on blamelesse Britomart 31
The crime which cursed Ate kindled earst,
The which like thornes did pricke his gealous hart,
And through his soule like poysned arrow perst,
That by no reason it might be reverst,
For ought that Glauce could or doe or say:
For aye the more that she the same reherst,
The more it gauld and griev'd him night and day,
That nought but dire revenge his anger mote defray.

So as they travelled, the drouping night, 32
Covered with cloudie storme and bitter showre,
That dreadfull seem'd to every living wight,
Upon them fell, before her timely howre ;
That forced them to seeke some covert bowre,
Where they might hide their heads in quiet rest,
And shrowd their persons from that stormie stowre.
Not farre away, not meete for any guest,
They spide a little cottage, like some poore mans nest.

Under a steepe hilles side it placed was, 33
There where the mouldred earth had cav'd the banke;
And fast beside a little brooke did pas
Of muddie water, that like puddle stanke,
By which few crooked sallowes grew in ranke :
Whereto approaching nigh, they heard the sound
Of many yron hammers beating ranke,
And answering their wearie turnes around,
That seemed some blacksmith dwelt in that desert
ground.

There entring in, they found the goodman selfe 34
Full busily unto his worke ybent ;
Who was to weete a wretched wearish elfe,
With hollow eyes and rawbone cheekes forspent,
As if he had in prison long bene pent :
Full blacke and griesly did his face appeare,
Besmeard with smoke that nigh his eye-sight blent ;
With rugged beard, and hoarie shagged heare,
The which he never wont to combe, or comely sheare.

Rude was his garment, and to rags all rent, 35
Ne better had he, ne for better cared :
With blistred hands emongst the cinders brent,
And fingers filthie with long nayles unpared,
Right fit to rend the food on which he fared.
His name was Care ; a blacksmith by his trade,
That neither day nor night from working spared,
But to small purpose yron wedges made :
Those be unquiet thoughts that carefull minds invade.

In which his worke he had sixe servants prest, 36
About the Andvile standing evermore
With huge great hammers, that did never rest
From heaping stroakes which thereon soused sore :
All sixe strong groomes, but one then other more ;
For by degrees they all were disagreed ;
So likewise did the hammers which they bore,
Like belles, in greatnesse orderly succeed,
That he which was the last the first did farre exceede.

He like a monstrous Gyant seem'd in sight, 37
Farre passing Bronteus or Pyracmon great,
The which in Lipari doe day and night
Frame thunderbolts for Joves avengefull threate.
So dreadfully he did the andvile beat,
That seem'd to dust he shortly would it drive :
So huge his hammer, and so fierce his heat,
That seem'd a rocke of Diamond it could rive
And rend a sunder quite, if he thereto list strive.

Sir Scudamour there entring much admired 38
The manner of their worke and wearie paine ;
And having long beheld at last enquired
The cause and end thereof, but all in vaine ;
For they for nought would from their worke refraine,
Ne let his speeches come unto their eare :
And eke the breathfull bellowes blew amaine,
Like to the Northren winde, that none could heare :
Those Pensifenesse did move ; and Sighes the bellows
weare.

Which when that warriour saw, he said no more, 39
But in his armour layd him downe to rest :
To rest he layd him downe upon the flore,
(Whylome for ventrous Knights the bedding best)
And thought his wearie limbs to have redrest.
And that old aged Dame, his faithfull Squire,
Her feeble joynts layd eke a downe to rest ;
That needed much her weake age to desire,
After so long a travell which them both did tire.

There lay Sir Scudamour long while expecting 40
 When gentle sleepe his heauie eyes would close ;
 Oft chaunging sides, and oft new place electing,
 Where better seem'd he mote himselfe repose ;
 And oft in wrath he thence againe uprose,
 And oft in wrath he layd him downe againe.
 But wheresoeuer he did himselfe dispose,
 He by no meanes could wished ease obtaine :
 So every place seem'd painefull, and ech changing vaine.

And evermore, when he to sleepe did thinke, 41
 The hammers sound his senses did molest ;
 And evermore, when he began to winke,
 The bellows noyse disturb'd his quiet rest,
 Ne suffred sleepe to settle in his brest :
 And all the night, the dogs did barke and howle
 About the house, at sent of stranger guest ;
 And now the crowing Cocke, and now the Owle
 Lowde shriking, him afflicted to the very sowle.

And, if by fortune any litle nap 42
 Upon his heauie eye-lids chaunst to fall,
 Eftsoones one of those villeins him did rap
 Upon his headpeece with his yron mall ;
 That he was soone awaked therewithall,
 And lightly started up as one affrayd,
 Or as if one him suddenly did call :
 So oftentimes he out of sleepe abrayd,
 And then lay musing long on that him ill apayd.

So long he muzed, and so long he lay, 43
 That at the last his wearie sprite, opprest
 With fleshly weaknesse, which no creature may
 Long time resist, gave place to kindly rest,
 That all his senses did full soone arrest :
 Yet in his soundest sleepe his dayly feare
 His ydle braine gan busily molest,
 And made him dreame those two disloyall were.
 The things, that day most minds, at night doe most
 appeare.

With that the wicked carle, the maister Smith, 44
A paire of redwhot yron tongs did take
Out of the burning cinders, and therewith
Under his side him nipt; that, forst to wake,
He felt his hart for very paine to quake,
And started up avenged for to be
On him the which his quiet slomber brake:
Yet, looking round about him, none could see;
Yet did the smart remaine, though he himselfe did flee.

In such disquiet and hartfretting payne 45
He all that night, that too long night, did passe.
And now the day out of the Ocean mayne
Began to peepe above this earthly masse,
With pearly dew sprinkling the morning grasse:
Then up he rose, like heavie lumpe of lead,
That in his face, as in a looking glasse,
The signes of anguish one mote plainely read,
And ghesse the man to be dismayd with gealous dread.

Unto his loftie steede he clombe anone, 46
And forth upon his former voiage fared,
And with him eke that aged Squire attone;
Who, whatsoever perill was prepared,
Both equall paines and equall perill shared.
The end whereof and daungerous event
Shall for another canticle be spared;
But here my wearie teeme, nigh over spent,
Shall breath it selfe awhile after so long a went.

CANTO VI.

*Both Scudamour and Arthegall
Doe fight with Britomart:
He sees her face; doth fall in love,
and soone from her depart.*

WHAT equall torment to the griefe of mind 1
And pyning anguish hid in gentle hart,
That inly feeds it selfe with thoughts unkind,
And nourisheth her owne consuming smart?
What medicine can any Leaches art
Yeeld such a sore, that doth her grievance hide,
And will to none her maladie impart?
Such was the wound that Scudamour did gride,
For which Dan Phebus selfe cannot a salve provide.

Who having left that restlesse house of Care, 2
The next day, as he on his way did ride,
Full of melancholie and sad misfare
Through misconceipt, all unawares espide
An armed Knight under a forrest side
Sitting in shade beside his grazing steede;
Who, soone as them approaching he descride,
Gan towards them to pricke with eger speede,
That seem'd he was full bent to some mischievous deede.

Which Scudamour perceiving forth issewed 3
To have rencountred him in equall race;
But soone as th' other nigh approaching vewed
The armes he bore, his speare he gan abase
And voide his course: at which so suddain case
He wondred much. But th' other thus can say:
"Ah, gentle Scudamour! unto your grace
I me submit, and you of pardon pray,
That almost had against you trespassed this day."

Whereto thus Scudamour : "Small harme it were 4
For any knight upon a ventrous knight
Without displeasance for to prove his spere.
But reade you, Sir, sith ye my name have hight,
What is your owne, that I mote you requite?"
"Certes," (sayd he) "ye mote as now excuse
Me from discovering you my name aright,
For time yet serves that I the same refuse;
But call ye me the Salvage Knight, as others use."

"Then this, Sir Salvage Knight," (quoth he) "areede :
Or doe you here within this forrest wonne,
That seemeth well to answere to your weede,
Or have ye it for some occasion donne?
That rather seemes, sith knowen armes ye shonne."
"This other day" (sayd he) "a stranger knight
Shame and dishonour hath unto me donne;
On whom I waite to wreake that foule despight,
When ever he this way shall passe by day or night."

"Shame be his meede," (quoth he) "that meaneth
But what is he by whom ye shamed were?" [shame!
"A stranger knight," sayd he, "unknowne by name,
But knowne by fame, and by an Hebene speare,
With which he all that met him downe did beare.
He, in an open Turney lately held,
Fro me the honour of that game did reare;
And having me, all wearie earst, downe feld,
The fayrest Ladie reft, and ever since withheld."

When Scudamour heard mention of that speare, 7
He wist right well that it was Britomart,
The which from him his fairest love did beare.
Tho gan he swell in every inner part
For fell despight, and gnaw his gealous hart,
That thus he sharply sayd : "Now, by my head,
Yet is not this the first unknightly part,
Which that same knight, whom by his launce I read,
Hoth doen to noble knights, that many makes him dread :

“For lately he my love hath fro me reft, 8
And eke defiled with foule villanie
The sacred pledge which in his faith was left,
In shame of knighthood and fidelitie;
The which ere long full deare he shall abie:
And if to that avenge by you decreed
This hand may helpe, or succour ought supplie,
It shall not fayle when so ye shall it need.”
So both to wreake their wrathes on Britomart agreed.

Whiles thus they communed, lo! farre away 9
A Knight soft ryding towards them they spyde,
Attyr'd in forraine armes and straunge aray:
Whom, when they nigh approcht, they plaine descryde
To be the same for whom they did abyde.
Sayd then Sir Scudamour, “Sir Salvage knight,
Let me this crave, sith first I was defyde,
That first I may that wrong to him requite;
And, if I hap to fayle, you shall recure my right.”

Which being yeelded, he his threatfull speare 10
Gan fewter, and against her fiercely ran.
Who soone as she him saw approaching neare
With so fell rage, her selfe she lightly gan
To dight, to welcome him well as she can;
But entertaind him in so rude a wise,
That to the ground she smote both horse and man:
Whence neither greatly hasted to arise,
But on their common harmes together did devise.

But Artégall, beholding his mischaunce, 11
New matter added to his former fire;
And eft aventring his steeleheaded launce,
Against her rode, full of despiteous ire,
That nought but spoyle and vengeance did require:
But to himselfe his felonous intent
Returning disappointed his desire,
Whiles unawares his saddle he forwent,
And found himselfe on ground in great amazement.

Lightly he started up out of that stound, 12
And snatching forth his direfull deadly blade
Did leape to her, as doth an eger hound
Thrust to an Hynd within some covert glade,
Whom without perill he cannot invade.
With such fell greedines he her assayled,
That though she mounted were, yet he her made
To give him ground, (so much his force prevayled)
And shun his mightie strokes, gainst which no armes
avayled.

So, as they coursed here and there, it chaunst 13
That, in her wheeling round, behind her crest
So sorely he her strooke, that thence it glaunst
Adowne her backe, the which it fairely blest
From foule mischance; ne did it ever rest,
Till on her horses hinder parts it fell;
Where byting deepe so deadly it imprest,
That quite it chynd his backe behind the sell,
And to alight on foote her algates did compell.

Like as the lightning brond from riven skie, 14
Throwne out by angry Jove in his vengeance,
With dreadfull force falles on some steeple hie;
Which battring downe, it on the church doth glance,
And teares it all with terrible mischance.
Yet she no whit dismayd her steed forsooke,
And casting from her that enchaunted launce,
Unto her sword and shield her soone betooke;
And therewithall at him right furiously she strooke.

So furiously she strooke in her first heat, 15
Whiles with long fight on foot he breathlesse was,
That she him forced backward to retreat,
And yeeld unto her weapon way to pas:
Whose raging rigour neither steele nor bras
Could stay, but to the tender flesh it went,
And pour'd the purple bloud forth on the gras;
That all his mayle yriv'd, and plates yrent,
Shew'd all his bodie bare unto the cruell dent.

At length, when as he saw her hastie heat 16
Abate, and panting breath begin to fayle,
He, through long sufferance growing now more great,
Rose in his strength, and gan her fresh assayle,
Heaping huge strokes as thicke as showre of hayle,
And lashing dreadfully at every part,
As if he thought her soule to disentrayle.
Ah, cruell hand! and thrise more cruell hart, [art!
That workst such wrecke on her to whom thou dearest

What yron courage ever could endure 17
To worke such outrage on so faire a creature;
And in his madnesse thinke with hands impure
To spoyle so goodly workmanship of nature,
The maker selfe resembling in her feature!
Certes some hellish furie or some feend
This mischiefe framd for their first loves defeature,
To bath their hands in bloud of dearest freend,
Thereby to make their loves beginning their lives end.

Thus long they trac'd and traverst to and fro, 18
Sometimes pursewing, and sometimes pursewed,
Still as advantage they espyde thereto:
But toward th' end Sir Arthegall renewed
His strength still more, but she still more decrewed.
At last his lucklesse hand he heav'd on hie,
Having his forces all in one accrewed,
And therewith stroke at her so hideouslie,
That seemed nought but death mote be her destinie.

The wicked stroke upon her helmet chaunst, 19
And with the force, whiche in it selfe it bore,
Her ventayle shard away, and thence forth glaunst
Adowne in vaine, ne arm'd her any more.
With that, her angels face, unseene afore,
Like to the ruddie morne appeard in sight,
Deawed with silver drops through sweating sore;
But somewhat redder then beseem'd aright, [fight:
Through toylesome heate and labour of her weary

And round about the same her yellow heare, 20
Having through stirring loosd their wonted band,
Like to a golden border did appeare,
Framed in goldsmithes forge with cunning hand :
Yet goldsmithes cunning could not understand
To frame such subtile wire, so shinie cleare ;
For it did glister like the golden sand,
The which Pactolus with his waters shere
Throwes forth upon the rivage round about him nere.

And as his hand he up againe did reare, 21
Thinking to worke on her his utmost wracke,
His powrelesse arme, benumbd with secret feare,
From his revengefull purpose shronke abacke,
And cruell sword out of his fingers slacke
Fell downe to ground ; as if the steele had sense,
And felt some ruth or sence his hand did lacke,
Or both of them did thinke obedience
To doe to so divine a beauties excellence.

And he himselfe, long gazing thereupon, 22
At last fell humbly downe upon his knee,
And of his wonder made religion,
Weening some heavenly goddesse he did see,
Or else unweeting what it else might bee ;
And pardon her besought his errour frayle,
That had done outrage in so high degree :
Whilest trembling horror did his sense assayle,
And made ech member quake, and manly hart to quayle.

Nathelesse she, full of wrath for that late stroke, 23
All that long while upheld her wrathfull hand,
With fell intent on him to bene ywroke ;
And, looking sterne, still over him did stand,
Threatning to strike unlesse he would withstand ;
And bad him rise, or surely he should die.
But, die or live, for nought he would upstand ;
But her of pardon prayd more earnestlie,
Or wreake on him her will for so great injurie.

Which when as Scudamour, who now abrayd, 24
Beheld, whereas he stood not farre aside,
He was therewith right wondrously dismayd;
And drawing nigh, when as he plaine descride
That peerelesse paterne of Dame nature's pride
And heavenly image of perfection,
He blest himselfe as one sore terrifide;
And turning feare to faint devotion,
Did worship her as some celestiall vision.

But Glauce, seeing all that chaunced there, 25
Well weeting how their errour to assoyle,
Full glad of so good end, to them drew nere,
And her salewd with seemely belaccoyle,
Joyous to see her safe after long toyle:
Then her besought, as she to her was deare,
To graunt unto those warriours truce a while;
Which yeelded, they their bevers up did reare,
And shew'd themselves to her such as indeed they were.

When Britomart with sharpe avizefull eye 26
Beheld the lovely face of Artegall
Tempred with sternesse and stout majestie,
She gan eftsoones it to her mind to call
To be the same which in her fathers hall
Long since in that enchaunted glasse she saw:
Therewith her wrathfull courage gan appall,
And haughtie spirits meekely to adaw,
That her enhaunced hand she downe can soft withdraw.

Yet she it forst to have againe upheld, 27
As fayning choler which was turn'd to cold;
But ever when his visage she beheld,
Her hand fell downe, and would no longer hold
The wrathfull weapon against his countnance bold:
But, when in vaine to fight she oft assayd,
She arm'd her tongue, and thought at him to scold;
Nathlesse her tongue not to her will obayd,
But brought forth speeches myld when she would have
missayd.

But Scudamour, now woxen inly glad 28
That all his gealous feare he false had found,
And how that Hag his love abused had
With breach of faith and loyaltie unsound,
The which long time his grieved hart did wound,
He thus bespake: "Certes, Sir Artegall,
I joy to see you lout so low on ground,
And now become to live a Ladies thrall,
That whylome in your minde wont to despise them all."

Soone as she heard the name of Artegall, 29
Her hart did leape, and all her hart-strings tremble,
For sudden joy and secret feare withall;
And all her vitall powres, with motion nimble
To succour it, themselves gan there assemble;
That by the swift recourse of flushing blood
Right plaine appeard, though she it would dissemble,
And fayned still her former angry mood,
Thinking to hide the depth by troubling of the flood.

When Glauce thus gan wisely all upknit: 30
"Ye gentle Knights, whom fortune here hath brought
To be spectators of this uncouth fit,
Which secret fate hath in this Ladie wrought
Against the course of kind, ne mervaile nought;
Ne thenceforth feare the thing that hethertoo
Hath troubled both your mindes with idle thought,
Fearing least she your loves away should woo:
Feared in vaine, sith meanes, ye see, there wants
theretoo.

"And you, Sir Artegall, the salvage knight, 31
Henceforth may not disdaine that womans hand
Hath conquered you anew in second fight;
For whylome they have conquerd sea, and land,
And heaven it selfe, that nought may them withstand.
Ne henceforth be rebellious unto love,
That is the crowne of knighthood, and the band
Of noble minds derived from above,
Which, being knit with vertue, never will remove.

“ And you, faire Ladie knight, my dearest Dame, 32
Relent the rigour of your wrathfull will,
Whose fire were better turn'd to other flame;
And wiping out remembrance of all ill,
Graunt him your grace; but so that he fulfill
The penance which ye shall to him impart:
For lovers heaven must passe by sorrowes hell.”
Thereat full inly blushed Britomart,
But Artegall close smyling joy'd in secret hart.

Yet durst he not make love so suddenly, 33
Ne thinke th' affection of her hart to draw
From one to other so quite contrary:
Besides, her modest countenance he saw
So goodly grave, and full of princely aw,
That it his ranging fancie did refraine,
And looser thoughts to lawfull bounds withdraw;
Whereby the passion grew more fierce and faine,
Like to a stubborne steede whom strong hand would
restraine.

But Scudamour, whose hart twixt doubtfull feare 34
And feeble hope hung' all this while suspence,
Desiring of his Amoret to heare
Some gladfull newes and sure intelligence,
Her thus bespake: “ But, Sir, without offence
Mote I request you tydings of my love,
My Amoret, sith you her freed fro thence
Where she, captived long, great woes did prove;
That where ye left I may her seeke, as doth behove.”

To whom thus Britomart: “ Certes, Sir knight, 35
What is of her become, or whether reft,
I can not unto you aread a right;
For from that time I from enchaunters theft
Her freed, in which ye her all hopelesse left,
I her preserv'd from perill and from feare,
And evermore from villenie her kept:
Ne ever was there wight to me more deare
Then she, ne unto whom I more true love did beare:

" Till on a day, as through a desert wyld 36
We travelled, both wearie of the way
We did alight, and sate in shadow myld,
Where fearelesse I to sleepe me downe did lay ;
But when as I did out of sleepe abray,
I found her not where I her left whyleare,
But thought she wandred was, or gone astray :
I cal'd her loud, I sought her farre and neare,
But no where could her find, nor tydings of her heare."

When Scudamour those heavie tydings heard, 37
His hart was thrild with point of deadly feare,
Ne in his face or bloud or life appeard ;
But senselesse stood, like to a mazed steare
That yet of mortall stroke the stound doth beare,
Till Glaunce thus : " Faire Sir, be nought dismayd
With needlesse dread, till certaintie ye heare ;
For yet she may be safe though somewhat strayd :
Its best to hope the best, though of the worst affrayd."

Nathlesse he hardly of her chearefull speech 38
Did comfort take, or in his troubled sight
Shew'd change of better cheare ; so sore a breach
That sudden newes had made into his spright,
Till Britomart him fairely thus behight :
" Great cause of sorrow certes, Sir, ye have ;
But comfort take ; for, by this heavens light,
I vow you dead or living not to leave,
Til I her find, and wreake on him that did her reave."

Therewith he rested, and well pleased was : 39
So, peace being confirm'd amongst them all,
They tooke their steeds, and forward thence did pas
Unto some resting place, which mote befall,
All being guided by Sir Artegall.
Where goodly solace was unto them made,
And dayly feasting both in bowre and hall,
Untill that they their wounds well healed had,
And wearie limmes recur'd after late usage bad.

In all which time Sir Artegall made way 40
Unto the love of noble Britomart,
And with meeke service and much suit did lay
Continuall siege unto her gentle hart;
Which, being whylome-launcht with lovely dart,
More eath was new impression to receive;
How ever she her paynd with womanish art
To hide her wound, that none might it perceive.
Vaine is the art that seekes it selfe for to deceive.

So well he woo'd her, and so well he wrought her, 41
With faire entreatie and sweet blandishment,
That at the length unto a bay he brought her,
So as she to his speeches was content
To lend an eare, and softly to relent.
At last, through many vowes which forth he pour'd,
And many othes, she yeelded her consent
To be his love, and take him for her Lord,
Till they with mariage meet might finish that accord.

Tho, when they had long time there taken rest, 42
Sir Artegall, who all this while was bound
Upon an hard adventure yet in quest,
Fit time for him thence to depart it found,
To follow that which he did long propound,
And unto her his congee came to take;
But her therewith full sore displeas'd he found,
And loth to leave her late betrothed make,
Her dearest love full loth so shortly to forsake.

Yet he with strong perswasions her asswaged, 43
And wonne her will to suffer him depart;
For which his faith with her he fast engaged,
And thousand vowes from bottome of his hart,
That, all so soone as he by wit or art
Could that atchieve whereto he did aspire,
He unto her would speedily revert:
No longer space thereto he did desire,
But till the horned moone three courses did expire.

With which she for the present was appeased, 44
And yeelded leave, how ever malcontent
She inly were and in her mind displeased.
So, early in the morrow next, he went
Forth on his way to which he was ybent;
Ne wight him to attend, or way to guide,
As whylome was the custome ancient
Mongst Knights when on adventures they did ride,
Save that she algates him a while accompanide.

And by the way she sundry purpose found 45
Of this or that, the time for to delay,
And of the perils whereto he was bound,
The feare whereof seem'd much her to affray;
But all she did was but to weare out day.
Full oftentimes she leave of him did take;
And eft againe deviz'd some what to say,
Which she forgot, whereby excuse to make;
So loth she was his companie for to forsake.

At last, when all her speeches she had spent, 46
And new occasion fayld her more to find,
She left him to his fortunes government,
And backe returned with right heavie mind
To Scudamour, whom she had left behind:
With whom she went to seeke faire Amoret,
Her second care, though in another kind:
For vertues onely sake, which doth beget
True love and faithfull friendship, she by her did set.

Backe to that desert forrest they retyred, 47
Where sorie Britomart had lost her late.
There they her sought, and every where inquired
Where they might tydings get of her estate;
Yet found they none. But by what haplesse fate
Or hard misfortune she was thence convayd,
And stolne away from her beloved mate,
Were long to tell: therefore, I here will stay,
Untill another tyde that I it finish may

CANTO VII.

*Amoret rapt by greedie lust
 Belinthebe saves from dread:
 The Squire her loves; and, being blam'd,
 his dayes in dole doth lead.*

GREAT God of love, that with thy cruell darts
 Doest conquer greatest conquerors on ground,
 And setst thy kingdome in the captive harts
 Of Kings and Keasars to thy service bound;
 What glorie, or what guerdon hast thou found
 In feeble Ladies tyranning so sore,
 And adding anguish to the bitter wound
 With which their lives thou lancedst long afore,
 By heaping stormes of trouble on them daily more?

So whylome didst thou to faire Florimell; 2
 And so and so to noble Britomart;
 So doest thou now to her of whom I tell,
 The lovely Amoret, whose gentle hart
 Thou martyrest with sorow and with smart,
 In salvage forrests and in deserts wide
 With Beares and Tygers taking heavie part,
 Withouten comfort and withouten guide,
 That pittie is to heare the perils which she tride.

So soone as she with that brave Britonesse 3
 Had left that Turneyment for beauties prise,
 They travel'd long; that now for wearinesse,
 Both of the way and warlike exercise,
 Both through a forest ryding did devise
 T' alight, and rest their wearie limbs awhile.
 There heavie sleepe the eye-lids did surprise
 Of Britomart, after long tedious toyle,
 That did her passed paines in quiet rest assoyle.

The whiles faire Amoret, of nought affeard, 4
Walkt through the wood, for pleasure or for need;
When suddenly behind her backe she heard
One rushing forth out of the thickest weed,
That, ere she backe could turne to taken heed,
Had unawares her snatched up from ground:
Feebly she shriekt, but so feebly indeed
That Britomart heard not the shrilling sound,
There where through weary travel she lay sleeping
sound.

It was to weet a wilde and salvage man; 5
Yet was no man, but onely like in shape,
And eke in stature higher by a span;
All overgrowne with haire, that could awhape
An hardy hart; and his wide mouth did gape
With huge great teeth, like to a tusked Bore:
For he liv'd all on ravin and on rape
Of men and beasts; and fed on fleshly gore,
The signe whereof yet stain'd his bloody lips afore.

His neather lip was not like man nor beast, 6
But like a wide deep poke, downe hanging low,
In which he wont the relickes of his feast
And cruell spoyle, which he had spard, to stow:
And over it his huge great nose did grow,
Full dreadfully empurpled all with bloud;
And downe both sides two wide long eares did glow,
And raught downe to his waste when up he stood,
More great then th' eares of Elephants by Indus flood.

His wast was with a wreath of yvie greene 7
Engirt about, ne other garment wore,
For all his haire was like a garment seene;
And in his hand a tall young oake he bore,
Whose knottie snags were sharpned all afore,
And beath'd in fire for steele to be in sted.
But whence he was, or of what wombe ybore,
Of beasts, or of the earth, I have not red,
But certes was with milke of Wolves and Tygres fed.

This ugly creature in his armes her snatcht, 3
And through the forrest bore her quite away,
With briers and bushes all to rent and scratcht;
Ne care he had, ne pittie of the pray,
Which many a knight had sought so many a day:
He stayed not, but in his armes her bearing
Ran till he came to th' end of all his way,
Unto his cave farre from all peoples hearing,
And there he threw her in, nought feeling, ne nought
fearing.

For she, deare Ladie, all the way was dead, 9
Whilest he in armes her bore; but, when she felt
Her selfe downe soust, she waked out of dread
Streight into griefe, that her deare hart nigh swelt,
And eft gan into tender teares to melt.
Then, when she lookt about, and nothing found
But darknesse and dread horror where she dwelt,
She almost fell againe into a swound;
Ne wist whether above she were or under ground.

With that she heard some one close by her side 10
Sighing and sobbing sore, as if the paine
Her tender hart in peeces would divide:
Which she long listning, softly askt againe
What mister wight it was that so did plaine?
To whom thus aunswer'd was: "Ah, wretched wight!
That seekes to know anothers griefe in vaine,
Unweeting of thine owne like haplesse plight:
Selfe to forget to mind another is ore-sight."

"Aye me!" (said she) "where am I, or with whom?
Emong the living, or emong the dead?
What shall of me, unhappy maid, become?
Shall death be th' end, or ought else worse, aread?"
"Unhappy mayd," then answer'd she, "whose dread
Untride is lesse then when thou shalt it try:
Death is to him, that wretched life doth lead,
Both grace and gaine; but he in hell doth lie,
That lives a loathed life, and wishing cannot die.

"This dismall day hath thee a captive made, 12
And vassall to the vilest wretch alive,
Whose cursed usage and ungodly trade
The heavens abhorre, and into darknesse drive;
For on the spoile of women he doth live,
Whose bodies chast, when ever in his powre
He may them catch unable to gainestrive,
He with his shamefull lust doth first deflowre,
And afterwarde themselves doth cruelly devoure.

"Now twenty daies, by which the sonnes of men 13
Divide their works, have past through heven sheene,
Since I was brought into this dolefull den;
During which space these sory eies have seen
Seaven women by him slaine, and eaten clene:
And now no more for him but I alone,
And this old woman, here remaining beene,
Till thou cam'st hither to augment our mone;
And of us three to morrow he will sure eate one."

"Ah, dreadfull tidings which thou doest declare," 14
(Quoth she) "of all that ever hath bene knowen!
Full many great calamities and rare
This feeble brest endured hath, but none
Equall to this, where ever I have gone.
But what are you, whom like unlucky lot
Hath linckt with me in the same chaine attone?"
"To tell" (quoth she) "that which ye see, needs not;
A wofull wretched maid, of God and man forgot!

"But what I was it irkes me to reherse; 15
Daughter unto a Lord of high degree;
That joyd in happy peace, till fates perverse
With guilefull love did secretly agree
To overthrow my state and dignitie.
It was my lot to love a gentle swaine,
Yet was he but a Squire of low degree
Yet was he meet, unless mine eye did faine,
By any Ladies side for Leman to have laine.

“But for his meannesse and disparagement, 16
My Sire, who me too dearely well did love,
Unto my choise by no meanes would assent,
But often did my folly fowle reprove :
Yet nothing could my fixed mind remove,
But, whether willed or nilled friend or foe,
I me resolv'd the utmost end to prove ;
And, rather then my love abandon so,
Both sire and friends and all for ever to forgo.

“Thenceforth I sought by secret meanes to worke 17
Time to my will, and from his wrathfull sight
To hide th' intent which in my heart did lurke,
Till I thereto had all things ready dight.
So on a day, unweeting unto wight,
I with that Squire agreede away to flit,
And in a privy place, betwixt us hight,
Within a grove appointed him to meete ;
To which I boldly came upon my feeble feete.

“But ah ! unhappy houre me thither brought, 18
For in that place where I him thought to find,
There was I found, contrary to my thought,
Of this accursed Carle of hellish kind,
The shame of men, and plague of womankind :
Who trussing me, as Eagle doth his pray,
Me hether brought with him as swift as wind,
Where yet untouched till this present day,
I rest his wretched thrall, the sad Æmylia.”

“Ah, sad Æmylia !” (then sayd Amoret) 19
“Thy ruefull plight I pittie as mine owne.
But read to me, by what devise or wit
Hast thou in all this time, from him unknowne,
Thine honors sav'd, though into thraldome throwne ?”
“Through helpe” (quoth she) “of this old woman here
I have so done, as she to me hath showne ;
For, ever when he burnt in lustfull fire,
She in my stead supplide his bestiall desire.”

Thus of their evils as they did discourse, 20
And each did other much bewaile and mone,
Loe! where the villaine selfe, their sorrowes sourse,
Came to the cave; and rolling thence the stone,
Which wont to stop the mouth thereof, that none
Might issue forth, came rudely rushing in,
And, spredding over all the flore alone,
Gan dight him selfe unto his wonted sinne;
Which ended, then his bloody banket should beginne.

Which when as fearefull Amoret perceived, 21
She staid not th' utmost end thereof to try,
But, like a ghastly Gelt whose wits are reaved,
Ran forth in hast with hideous outcry,
For horreur of his shamefull villany:
But after her full lightly he uprose,
And her pursu'd as fast as she did flie.
Full fast she flies, and farre afore him goes, [toes.
Ne feeles the thorns and thickets pricke her tender

For hedge, nor ditch, nor hill, nor dale she staies, 22
But overleapes them all, like Robucke light,
And through the thickest makes her nighest waies:
And evermore, when with regardfull sight
She looking backe espies that griesly wight
Approching nigh, she gins to mend her pace,
And makes her feare a spur to hast her flight;
More swift than Myrrh' or Daphne in her race,
Or any of the Thracian Ninphes in salvage chase.

Long so she fled, and so he follow'd long; 23
Ne living aide for her on earth appeares,
But if the heavens helpe to redresse her wrong,
Moved with pity of her plenteous teares.
It fortun'd Belphebe with her peares,
The woody Nimphs, and with that lovely boy,
Was hunting then the Libbards and the Beares
In these wild woods, as was her wonted joy,
To banish sloth that oft doth noble mindes annoy.

It so befell, as oft it fals in chace, 24
That each of them from other sundred were ;
And that same gentle Squire arriv'd in place
Where this same cursed caytive did appeare
Pursuing that faire Lady full of feare :
And now he her quite overtaken had ;
And now he her away with him did beare
Under his arme, as seeming wondrous glad,
That by his grenning laughter mote farre off be rad.

Which drery sight the gentle Squire espying 25
Doth hast to crosse him by the nearest way,
Led with that wofull Ladies piteous crying,
And him assailes with all the might he may ;
Yet will not he the lovely spoile downe lay,
But with his craggy club in his right hand
Defends him selfe, and saves his gotten pray :
Yet had it bene right hard him to withstand,
But that he was full light and nimble on the land.

Thereto the villaine used craft in fight ; 26
For ever when the Squire his javelin shooke,
He held the Lady forth before him right,
And with her body, as a buckler, broke
The puissance of his intended stroke :
And if it chaunst, (as needs it must in fight)
Whilest he on him was greedy to be wroke,
That any little blow on her did light,
Then would he laugh aloud, and gather great delight.

Which subtill sleight did him encumber much, 27
And made him oft, when he would strike, forbear ;
For hardly could he come the carle to touch,
But that he her must hurt, or hazard neare.
Yet he his hand so carefully did beare,
That at the last he did himselfe attaine,
And therein left the pike head of his speare :
A streame of coleblacke bloud thence gusht amaine,
That all her silken garments did with bloud bestaine.

With that he threw her rudely on the flore, 28
 And, laying both his hands upon his glave,
 With dreadfull strokes let drive at him so sore,
 That forst him flie abacke, himselfe to save :
 Yet he therewith so felly still did rave,
 That scarce the Squire his hand could once upreare,
 But for advantage ground unto him gave,
 Tracing and traversing, now here, now there ;
 For bootlesse thing it was to think such blowes to beare.

Whilest thus in battell they embusied were, 29
 Belphebe, raunging in that forrest wide,
 The hideous noise of their huge strokes did heare,
 And drew thereto, making her eare her guide :
 Whom when that theefe approching nigh espide
 With bow in hand and arrowes ready bent,
 He by his former combate would not bide,
 But fled away with ghastly dreriment,
 Well knowing her to be his deaths sole instrument.

Whom seeing flie she speedily poursewed, 30
 With winged feete as nimble as the winde,
 And ever in her bow she ready shewed
 The arrow to his deadly marke desynde.
 As when Latonaes daughter, cruell kynde,
 In vengeance of her mothers great disgrace,
 With fell despight her cruell arrowes tynde
 Gainst wofull Niobes unhappy race,
 That all the gods did mone her miserable case.

So well she sped her, and so far she ventred, 31
 That ere unto his hellish den he raught,
 Even as he ready was there to have entred,
 She sent an arrow forth with mighty draught,
 That in the very dore him overcaught,
 And, in his nape arriving, through it thrild
 His greedy throte, therewith in two distraught,
 That all his vitall spirites thereby spild,
 And all his hairy brest with gory bloud was fild.

Whom when on ground she groveling saw to rowle, 32
She ran in hast his life to have bereft ;
But, ere she could him reach, the sinfull sowle
Having his carrion corse quite sencelesse left
Was fled to hell, surcharg'd with spoile and theft :
Yet over him she there long gazing stood,
And oft admir'd his monstrous shape, and oft
His mighty limbs, whilst all with filthy blood
The place there overflowne seemd like a sodaine flood.

Thenceforth she past into his dreadfull den, 33
Where nought but darkesome drerinesse she found,
Ne creature saw, but hearkned now and then
Some litle whispering, and soft groning sound.
With that she askt, what ghosts there under ground
Lay hid in horreur of eternall night ?
And bad them, if so be they were not bound,
To come and shew themselves before the light,
Now freed from feare and danger of that dismall wight.

Then forth the sad Æmylia issewed, 34
Yet trembling every joynt through former feare ;
And after her the Hag, there with her mewd,
A foule and loathsome creature, did appeare ;
A leman fit for such a lover deare :
That mov'd Belphebe her no lesse to hate,
Then for to rue the others heavy cheare ;
Of whom she gan enquire of her estate,
Who all to her at large, as hapned, did relate.

Thence she them brought toward the place where late
She left the gentle Squire with Amoret :
There she him found by that new lovely mate,
Who lay the whiles in swoune, full sadly set,
From her faire eyes wiping the deawy wet
Which softly stild, and kissing them atweene,
And handling soft the hurts which she did get ;
For of that Carle she sorely bruz'd had beene,
Als of his owne rash hand one wound was to be seene.

Which when she saw with sodaine glauncing eye, 36
Her noble heart with sight thereof was fild
With deepe disdain and great indignity,
That in her wrath she thought them both have thrild
With that selfe arrow which the Carle had kild;
Yet held her wrathfull hand from vengeance sore:
But drawing nigh, ere he her well beheld,
"Is this the faith?" she said; and said no more,
But turnd her face, and fled away for evermore.

He seeing her depart arose up light, 37
Right sore agrieved at her sharpe reproofe,
And follow'd fast; but when he came in sight,
He durst not nigh approach, but kept aloofe,
For dread of her displeasures utmost proofe:
And evermore, when he did grace entreat,
And framed speaches fit for his behoofe,
Her mortall arrowes she at him did threat,
And forst him backe with fowle dishonor to retreat.

At last, when long he follow'd had in vaine, 38
Yet found no ease of grieve nor hope of grace,
Unto those woods he turned backe againe,
Full of sad anguish and in heavy case;
And finding there fit solitary place
For wofull wight, chose out a gloomy glade,
Where hardly eye mote see bright heavens face
For mossy trees, which covered all with shade
And sad melancholy: there he his cabin made.

His wonted warlike weapons all he broke 39
And threw away, with vow to use no more,
Ne thenceforth ever strike in battell stroke,
Ne ever word to speake to woman more;
But in that wilderness, of men forlore,
And of the wicked world forgotten quight,
His hard mishap in dolor to deplore,
And wast his wretched daies in wofull plight:
So on him selfe to wreake his follies owne despight.

And eke his garment, to be thereto meet, 40
He wilfully did cut and shape anew ;
And his faire lockes, that wont with ointment sweet
To be embaulm'd, and sweat out dainty dew,
He let to grow and griesly to concrew,
Uncomb'd, uncurl'd, and carelesly unshed ;
That in short time his face they overgrew,
And over all his shoulders did dispred,
That who he whilome was uneath was to be red.

There he continued in this carefull plight, 41
Wretchedly wearing out his youthly yeares,
Through wilfull penury consumed quight,
That like a pined ghost he soone appeares :
For other food then that wilde forrest beares,
Ne other drinke there did he ever tast
Then running water tempred with his teares,
The more his weakened body so to wast,
That out of all mens knowledge he was worne at last.

For on a day, by fortune as it fell, 42
His owne deare Lord Prince Arthure came that way,
Seeking adventures where he mote heare tell ;
And, as he through the wandring wood did stray,
Having espide this Cabin far away,
He to it drew, to weet who there did wonne ;
Weening therein some holy Hermit lay,
That did resort of sinfull people shonne, [sunne.
Or else some woodman shrowded there from scorching

Arriving there he found this wretched man 43
Spending his daies in dolour and despaire,
And through long fasting woxen pale and wan,
All overgrown with rude and rugged haire :
That albeit his owne dear Squire he were,
Yet he him knew not, ne aviz'd at all,
But like strange wight, whom he had seene no where,
Saluting him, gan into speach to fall,
And pittty much his plight, that liv'd like outcast thrall.

But to his speach he aunswered no whit,
But stood still mute, as if he had beene dum,
Ne signe of sence did shew, ne common wit,
As one with griefe and anguishe overcum,
And unto every thing did aunswere mum :
And ever, when the Prince unto him spake,
He louted lowly, as did him becum,
And humble homage did unto him make,
Midst sorrow shewing joyous semblance for his sake.

At which his uncouth guise and usage quaint
The Prince did wonder much, yet could not ghesse
The cause of that his sorrowfull constraint ;
Yet weend, by secret signes of manlinesse
Which close appeard in that rude brutishnesse,
That he whilome some gentle swaine had beene,
Traind up in feats of armes and knightlinesse ;
Which he observ'd, by that he him had seene
To weld his naked sword, and try the edges keene.

And eke by that he saw on every tree,
How he the name of one engraven had
Which likly was his liefest love to be,
From whom he now so sorely was bestad,
Which was by him BELPHEEE rightly rad :
Yet who was that Belphebe he ne wist ;
Yet saw he often how he wexed glad
When he it heard, and how the ground he kist
Wherein it written was, and how himselfe he blist.

Tho, when he long had marked his demeanor,
And saw that all he said and did was vaine,
Ne ought mote make him change his wonted tenor,
Ne ought mote ease or mitigate his paine,
He left him there in languor to remaine,
Till time for him should remedy provide,
And him restore to former grace againe :
Which, for it is too long here to abide,
I will deferre the end untill another tide.

CANTO VIII.

*The gentle Squire recovers grace:
Sclaunder her guests doth staine:
Corfiambo chaseth Placidus,
And is by Arthure slaine.*

WELL said the wiseman, now prov'd true by
this 1

Which to this gentle Squire did happen late,
That the displeasure of the mighty is
Then death it selfe more dread and desperate;
For nought the same may calme ne mitigate,
Till time the tempest doe thereof delay
With sufferaunce soft, which rigour can abate,
And have the sterne remembrance wypt away
Of bitter thoughts, which deepe therein infixed lay.

Like as it fell to this unhappy boy, 2
Whose tender heart the faire Belphebe had
With one sterne looke so daunted, that no joy
In all his life, which afterwards he lad,
He ever tasted; but with penaunce sad
And pensive sorrow pind and wore away,
Ne ever laught, ne once shew'd countenance glad,
But alwaies wept and wailed night and day,
As blasted bloosme through heat doth languish and
decay:

Till on a day, as in his wonted wise 3
His doole he made, there chaunst a turtle Dove
To come where he his dolours did devise,
That likewise late had lost her dearest love,
Which losse her made like passion also prove:
Who seeing his sad plight, her tender heart
With deare compassion deeply did enmove,
That she gan mone his undeserved smart,
And with her dolefull accent beare with him a part.

Shee sitting by him as on ground he lay, 4
Her mournefull notes full piteously did frame,
And thereof made a lamentable lay,
So sensibly compyld, that in the same
Him seemed oft he heard his owne right name.
With that he forth would poure so plenteous teares,
And beat his breast unworthy of such blame,
And knocke his head, and rend his rugged heares,
That could have perst the hearts of Tigres and of Beares.

Thus, long this gentle bird to him did use 5
Withouten dread of perill to repaire
Unto his wonne, and with her mournefull muse
Him to recomfort in his greatest care,
That much did ease his mourning and misfare :
And every day, for guerdon of her song,
He part of his small feast to her would share ;
That, at the last, of all his woe and wrong
Companion she became, and so continued long.

Upon a day as she him sate beside, 6
By chance he certaine miniments forth drew,
Which yet with him as reliques did abide
Of all the bounty which Belphebe threw
On him, whilst goodly grace she him did shew :
Amongst the rest a jewell rich he found,
That was a Ruby of right perfect hew,
Shap'd like a heart yet bleeding of the wound,
And with a litle golden chaine about it bound.

The same he tooke, and with a riband new, 7
In which his Ladies colours were, did bind
About the turtles necke, that with the vew
Did greatly solace his engrieved mind.
All unawares the bird, when she did find
Her selfe so deckt, her nimble wings displaid,
And flew away as lightly as the wind :
Which sodaine accident him much dismaid,
And looking after long did marke which way she straid.

But when as long he looked had in vaine, 8
Yet saw her forward still to make her flight,
His weary eie returnd to him againe,
Full of discomfort and disquiet plight,
That both his juell he had lost so light,
And eke his deare companion of his care.
But that sweet bird departing flew forthright,
Through the wide region of the wastfull aire,
Untill she came where wonned his Belphebe faire.

There found she her (as then it did betide) 9
Sitting in covert shade of arbors sweet,
After late wearie toile which she had tride
In salvage chase, to rest as seem'd her meet.
There she alighting fell before her feet,
And gan to her her mournfull plaint to make,
As was her wont, thinking to let her weet
The great tormenting grieve that for her sake
Her gentle Squire through her displeasure did pertake.

She her beholding with attentive eye, 10
At length did marke about her purple brest
That precious juell, which she formerly
Had knowne right well, with coloured ribbands drest:
Therewith she rose in hast, and her addrest
With ready hand it to have reft away;
But the swift bird obayd not her behest,
But swarv'd aside, and there againe did stay:
She follow'd her, and thought againe it to assay.

And ever when she nigh approcht the Dove 11
Would flit a litle forward, and then stay
Till she drew neare, and then againe remove;
So tempting her still to pursue the pray,
And still from her escaping soft away:
Till that at length into that forrest wide
She drew her far, and led with slow delay.
In th' end she her unto that place did guide,
Whereas that wofull man in languor did abide.

Eftsoones she flew unto his fearelesse hand, 12
And there a piteous ditty new deviz'd,
As if she would have made her understand
His sorrowes cause, to be of her despis'd :
Whom when saw in wretched weedes disguiz'd,
With heary glib deform'd, and meiger face,
Like ghost late risen from his grave agryz'd,
She knew him not, but pittied much his case,
And wisht it were in her to doe him any grace.

He her beholding at her feet downe fell, 13
And kist the ground on which her sole did tread,
And washt the same with water which did well
From his moist eies, and like two streames proceed;
Yet spake no word, whereby she might aread
What mister wight he was, or what he ment ;
But as one daunted with her presence dread,
Onely few ruefull lookes unto her sent,
As messengers of his true meaning and intent.

Yet nathemore his meaning she ared, 14
But wondred much at his so selcouth case ;
And by his persons secret seemlyhed
Well weend that he had beene some man of place,
Before misfortune did his hew deface ;
That being mov'd with ruth she thus bespake :
" Ah ! wofull man, what heavens hard disgrace,
Or wrath of cruell wight on thee ywrake,
Or selfe disliked life, doth thee thus wretched make ?

" If heaven ; then none may it redresse or blame, 15
Sith to his powre we all are subject borne :
If wrathfull wight ; then fowle rebuke and shame
Be theirs that have so cruell thee forlorne !
But, if through inward grieve, or wilfull scorne
Of life, it be ; then better doe advise :
For he whose daies in wilfull woe are worne,
The grace of his Creator doth despise,
That will not use his gifts for thanklesse nigardise."

When so he heard her say, eftsoones he brake, 16
His sodaine silence which he long had pent,
And, sighing inly deepe, her thus bespake :
“ Then, have they all themselves against me bent :
For heaven, first author of my languishment,
Envyng my too great felicity,
Did closely with a cruell one consent
To cloud my daies in dolefull misery,
And make me loath this life, still longing for to die.

“ Ne any but your selfe, O dearest dred, 17
Hath done this wrong, to wreake on worthlesse wight
Your high displesure, through misdeeming bred :
That, when your pleasure is to deeme aright,
Ye may redresse, and me restore to light !”
Which sory words her mightie hart did mate
With mild regard to see his ruefull plight,
That her inburning wrath she gan abate,
And him receiv'd againe to former favours state.

In which he long time afterwards did lead 18
An happie life with grace and good accord,
Fearlesse of fortunes chaunge or envies dread,
And eke all mindlesse of his owne deare Lord
The noble Prince, who never heard one word
Of tydings what did unto him betide,
Or what good fortune did to him afford ;
But through the endlesse world did wander wide,
Him seeking evermore, yet no where him describe :

Till on a day, as through that wood he rode, 19
He chaunst to come where those two Ladies late,
Æmylia and Amoret, abode,
Both in full sad and sorrowfull estate :
The one right feeble through the evill rate
Of food which in her duresse she had found ;
The other almost dead and desperate [wound
Through her late hurts, and through that haplesse
With which the Squire, in her defence, her sore astound

Whom when the Prince beheld, he gan to rew 20
The evill case in which those Ladies lay ;
But most was moved at the piteous vew
Of Amoret, so neare unto decay,
That her great daunger did him much dismay.
Eftsoones that pretious liquour forth he drew,
Which he in store about him kept alway,
And with few drops thereof did softly dew
Her wounds, that unto strength restor'd her soone anew.

Tho, when they both recovered were right well, 21
He gan of them inquire, what evill guide
Them thether brought, and how their harmes befell?
To whom they told all that did them betide,
And how from thraldome vile they were untide,
Of that same wicked Carle, by Virgins hond;
Whose bloudie corse they shew'd him there beside,
And eke his cave in which they both were bond :
At which he wondred much when all those signes he
fond.

And evermore he greatly did desire 22
To know what Virgin did them thence unbind,
And oft of them did earnestly inquire,
Where was her won, and how he mote her find.
But, when as nought according to his mind
He could out-learne, he them from ground did reare,
No service lothsome to a gentle kind,
And on his warlike beast them both did beare,
Himselfe by them on foot to succour them from feare.

So when that forrest they had passed well, 23
A litle cotage farre away they spide,
To which they drew ere night upon them fell ;
And entring in found none therein abide,
But one old woman sitting there beside
Upon the ground in ragged rude attyre,
With filthy lockes about her scattered wide,
Gnawing her nayles for felnesse and for yre,
And there out sucking venime to her parts entyre.

A foule and loathly creature sure in sight, 24
And in conditions to be loath'd no lesse,
For she was stuf with rancour and despight
Up to the throat, that oft with bitterness
It forth would breake, and gush in great excesse,
Pouring out streames of poyson and of gall
Gainst all that truth or vertue doe professe;
Whom she with leasings lewdly did miscall
And wickedly backbite: Her name men Schlaunder call.

Her nature is all goodnesse to abuse, 25
And causelesse crimes continually to frame,
With which she guiltlesse persons may accuse,
And steale away the crowne of their good name:
Ne ever Knight so bold, ne ever Dame
So chast and loyall liv'd, but she would strive
With forged cause them falsely to defame;
Ne ever thing so well was doen alive, [prive.
But she with blame would blot, and of due praise de-

Her words were not as common words are ment, 26
T' expresse the meaning of the inward mind,
But noysome breath, and poysnous spirit sent
From inward parts, with cancred malice lind,
And breathed forth with blast of bitter wind:
Which passing through the eares would pierce the
hart,
And wound the soule it selfe with grieve unkind;
For, like the stings of aspes that kill with smart,
Her spightfull words did pricke and wound the inner
part.

Such was that Hag, unmeet to host such guests, 27
Whom greatest Princes court would welcome fayne;
But neede, that answers not to all requests,
Bad them not looke for better entertayne:
And eke that age despysed nicenesse vaine,
Enur'd to hardnesse and to homely fare,
Which them to warlike discipline did trayne,
And manly limbs endur'd with litle care
Against all hard mishaps and fortunelesse misfare.

Then all that evening, welcommed with cold 28
And chearelesse hunger, they together spent ;
Yet found no fault, but that the Hag did scold
And rayle at them with grudgefull discontent,
For lodging there without her owne consent :
Yet they endured all with patience milde,
And unto rest themselves all onely lent,
Regardlessse of that queane so base and vilde
To be unjustly blamd, and bitterly revilde.

Here, well I weene, when as these rimes be red 29
With misregard, that some rash witted wight,
Whose looser thought will lightly be misled,
These gentle Ladies will misdeeme too light
For thus conversing with this noble Knight ;
Sith now of dayes such temperance is rare
And hard to finde, that heat of youthfull spright
For ought will from his greedie pleasure spare :
More hard for hungry steed t'abstaine from pleasant
lare.

But antique age, yet in the infancie 30
Of time, did live then like an innocent,
In simple truth and blamelesse chastitie ;
Ne then of guile had made experiment ;
But, voide of vile and treacherous intent,
Held vertue for it selfe in soveraine awe :
Then loyall love had royall regiment,
And each unto his lust did make a lawe,
From all forbidden things his liking to withdraw.

The Lyon there did with the Lambe consort, 31
And eke the Dove sate by the Faulcons side ;
Ne each of other feared fraud or tort,
But did in safe securitie abide,
Withouten perill of the stronger pride :
But when the world woxe old, it woxe warre old,
(Whereof it hight) and, having shortly tride
The traines of wit, in wickednesse woxe bold,
And dared of all sinnes the secrets to unfold.

Then beautie, which was made to represent 32
The great Creatours owne resemblance bright,
Unto abuse of lawlesse lust was lent,
And made the baite of bestiall delight :
Then fairegrew foule, and foule grew faire in sight;
And that, which wont to vanquish God and man,
Was made the vassall of the victors might :
Then did her glorious flowre wax dead and wan,
Despisd and troden downe of all that overran.

And now it is so utterly decayd, 33
That any bud thereof doth scarce remaine,
But if few plants, preserv'd through heavenly ayd,
In Princes Court doe hap to sprout againe,
Dew'd with her drops of bountie Soveraine,
Which from that goodly glorious flowre proceed,
Sprung of the auncient stocke of Princes straine,
Now th' onely remnant of that royall breed,
Whose noble kind at first was sure of heavenly seed.

Tho soone as day discovered heavens face 34
To sinfull men with darknes overdight,
This gentle crew gan from their eye-lids chace
The drowzie humour of the dampish night,
And did themselves unto their journey dight.
So forth they yode, and forward softly paced,
That them to view had bene an uncouth sight,
How all the way the Prince on footpace traced,
The Ladies both on horse, together fast embraced.

Soone as they thence departed were afore, 35
That shamefull Hag, the slaunder of her sexe,
Them follow'd fast, and them reviled sore,
Him calling theefe, them whores; that much did vex
His noble hart: thereto she did annexe
False crimes and facts, such as they never ment,
That those two Ladies much asham'd did wexe:
The more did she pursue her lewd intent,
And rayl'd and rag'd, till she had all her poyson spent.

At last when they were passed out of sight, 36
Yet she did not her spightfull speech forbear,
But after them did barke, and still backbite,
Though there were none her hatefull words to heare.
Like as a curre doth felly bite and teare
The stone which passed straunger at him threw :
So she them seeing past the reach of eare,
Against the stones and trees did rayle anew,
Till she had duld thesting which in her tongs endgrew.

They passing forth kept on their readie way, 37
With easie steps so soft as foot could stryde,
Both for great feeblesse, which did oft assay
Faire Amoret that scarcely she could ryde,
And eke through heauey armes which sore annoyd
The Prince on foot, not wonted so to fare ;
Whose steadie hand was faine his steede to guyde,
And all the way from trotting hard to spare :
So was his toyle the more, the more that was his care.

At length they spide where towards them with speed
A Squire came gallopping, as he would flie,
Bearing a litle Dwarfe before his steed,
That all the way full loud for aide did crie,
That seem'd his shrikes would rend the brasen skie :
Whom after did a mighty man pursew,
Ryding upon a Dromedare on hie,
Of stature huge, and horrible of hew,
That would have maz'd a man his dreadfull face to vew.

For from his fearefull eyes two fierie beames, 39
More sharpe then points of needles, did proceede,
Shooting forth farre away two flaming streames,
Full of sad powre, that poysnous bale did breede
To all that on him lookt without good heed,
And secretly his enemies did slay
Like as the Basiliske, of serpents seede,
From powrefull eyes close venim doth convey
Into the lookers hart, and killeth farre away.

He all the way did rage at that same Squire, 40
And after him full many threatnings threw,
With curses vaine in his avengefull ire;
But none of them (so fast away he flew)
Him overtooke before he came in vew:
Where when he saw the Prince in armour bright,
He cald to him aloud his case to rew,
And rescue him, through succour of his might,
From that his cruell foe that him pursewd in sight.

Eftsoones the Prince tooke downe those Ladies twaine
From loftie steede, and mounting in their stead
Came to that Squire, yet trembling every vaine;
Of whom he gan enquire his cause of dread:
Who as he gan the same to him aread,
Loe! hard behind his backe his foe was prest,
With dreadfull weapon aymed at his head,
That unto death had doen him unredrest,
Had not the noble Prince his readie stroke repress.

Who thrusting boldly twixt him and the blow, 42
The burden of the deadly brunt did beare
Upon his shield, which lightly he did throw
Over his head before the harme came neare
Nathlesse it fell with so despiteous dreare
And heavie sway, that hard unto his crowne
The shield it drove, and did the covering reare.
Therewith both Squire and dwarfe did tomble downe
Unto the earth, and lay long while in senselesse swowne

Whereat the Prince full wrath his strong right hand
In full avengement heaved up on hie,
And stroke the Pagan with his steely brand
So sore, that to his saddle bow thereby
He bowed low, and so a while did lie:
And, sure, had not his massie yron mace
Betwixt him and his hurt bene happily,
It would have cleft him to the girding place
Yet, as it was, it did astonish him long space.

But, when he to himselfe returnd againe, 44
All full of rage he gan to curse and sweare,
And vow by Mahoune that he should be slaine.
With that his murderous mace he up did reare,
That seemed nought the souse thereof could beare,
And therewith smote at him with all his might;
But, ere that it to him approched neare,
The royall child with readie quick foresight
Did shun the prooffe thereof, and it avoyded light.

But ere his hand he could recure againe 45
To ward his bodie from the balefull stound,
He smote at him with all his might and maine,
So furiously that, ere he wist, he found
His head before him tombling on the ground;
The whiles his babling tongue did yet blaspheme
And curse his God that did him so confound:
The whiles his life ran foorth in bloudie streame,
His soule descended downe into the Stygian reame.

Which when that Squire beheld, he woxe full glad 46
To see his foe breath out his spright in vaine:
But that same dwarfe right sorie seem'd and sad,
And howld aloud to see his Lord there slaine,
And rent his haire and scratcht his face for paine.
Then gan the Prince at leasure to inquire
Of all the accident there hapned plaine,
And what he was whose eyes did flame with fire?
All which was thus to him declared by that Squire.

"This mightie man," (quoth he) "whom you have 47
slaine,
Of an huge Geauntesse whylome was bred,
And by his strength rule to himselfe did gaine
Of many Nations into thraldome led,
And mightie kingdomes of his force adred;
Whom yet he conquer'd not by bloudie fight,
Ne hostes of men with banners brode dispred,
But by the powre of his infectious sight,
With which he killed all that came within his might.

“ Ne was he ever vanquished afore, 48
But ever vanquisht all with whom he fought;
Ne was there man so strong, but he downe bore;
Ne woman yet so faire, but he her brought
Unto his bay, and captived her thought:
For most of strength and beautie his desire
Was spoyle to make, and wast them unto nought,
By casting secret flakes of lustfull fire
From his false eyes into their harts and parts entire.

“ Therefore Corflambo was he cald aright, 49
Though namelesse there his bodie now doth lie;
Yet hath he left one daughter that is hight
The faire Pæana, who seemes outwardly
So faire as ever yet saw living eie;
And were her vertue like her beautie bright,
She were as faire as any under skie:
But ah! she given is to vaine delight,
And eke too loose of life, and eke of love too light.

“ So, as it fell, there was a gentle Squire 50
That lov'd a Ladie of high parentage;
But for his meane degree might not aspire
To match so high, her friends with counsell sage
Dissuaded her from such a disparage:
But she, whose hart to love was wholly lent,
Out of his hands could not redeeme her gage,
But, firmly following her first intent, [sent.
Resolv'd with him to wend, gainst all her friends con-

“ So twixt themselves they pointed time and place: 51
To which when he according did repaire,
An hard mishap and disaventrous case
Him chaunst: in stead of his Æmylia faire,
This Gyants sonne, that lies there on the laire
An headlesse heape, him unawares there caught;
And all dismayd through mercillesse despaire
Him wretched thrall unto his dongeon brought,
Where he remaines, of all unsuccour'd and unsought.

"This Gyants daughter came upon a day 52
Unto the prison, in her joyous-glee,
To view the thralls which there in bondage lay :
Amongst the rest she chaunced there to see
This lovely swaine, the Squire of low degree ;
To whom she did her liking lightly cast,
And wooed him her paramour to bee :
From day to day she woo'd and prayd him fast,
And for his love him promist libertie at last.

"He, though affide unto a former love, 53
To whom his faith he firmly ment to hold,
Yet seeing not how thence he mote remove,
But by that meanes which fortune did unfold,
Her graunted love, but with affection cold,
To win her grace his libertie to get :
Yet she him still detaines in captive hold,
Fearing least if she should him freely set,
He would her shortly leave, and former love forget.

"Yet so much favour she to him hath hight 54
Above the rest, that he sometimes may space
And walke about her gardens of delight,
Having a keeper still with him in place ;
Which keeper is this Dwarfe, her dearling base,
To whom the keyes of every prison dore
By her committed be, of speciall grace,
And at his will may whom he list restore,
And whom he list reserve to be afflicted more.

"Whereof when tydings came unto mine eare, 55
Full inly sorie, for the fervent zeale
Which I to him as to my soule did beare,
I thether went: where I did long conceale
My selfe, till that the Dwarfe did me reveale,
And told his Dame her Squire of low degree
Did secretly out of her prison steale ;
For me he did mistake that Squire to bee,
For never two so like did living creature see.

“ Then was I taken and before her brought, 56
Who, through the likenesse of my outward hew,
Being likewise beguiled in her thought,
Gan blame me much for being so untrew
To seeke by flight her fellowship t’eschew,
That lov’d me deare, as dearest thing alive.
Thence she commaunded me to prison new :
Whereof I glad did not gainesay nor strive,
But suffred that same Dwarfe me to her dongeon drive.

“ There did I finde mine onely faithfull frend 57
In heavy plight and sad perplexitie :
Whereof I sorie, yet myselfe did bend
Him to recomfort with my companie,
But him the more agreev’d I found thereby ;
For all his joy, he said, in that distresse
Was mine and his Æmylias libertie.
Æmylia well he lov’d, as I mote ghesse,
Yet greater love to me then her he did professe.

“ But I with better reason him aviz’d, 58
And shew’d him how, through error and misthought
Of our like persons, eath to be disguiz’d,
Or his exchange or freedom might be wrought.
Whereto full loth was he, ne would for ought
Consent that I, who stood all fearelesse free,
Should wilfully be into thraldome brought,
Till fortune did perforce it so decree :
Yet, over-ruld at last, he did to me agree.

“ The morrow next, about the wonted howre, 59
The Dwarfe cald at the doore of Amyas
To come forthwith unto his Ladies bowre :
In steed of whom forth came I, Placidas,
And undiscerned forth with him did pas.
There with great joyance and with gladsome glee
Of faire Pæana I received was,
And oft imbrast, as if that I were hee,
And with kind words accoyd, vowing great love to mee.

“ Which I, that was not bent to former love 60
As was my friend that had her long refus'd,
Did well accept, as well it did behove,
And to the present neede it wisely usd.
My former hardnesse first I faire excusd ;
And after promist large amends to make.
With such smooth termes her error I abusd
To my friends good more then for mine owne sake,
For whose sole libertie I love and life did stake.

“ Thenceforth I found more favour at her hand, 61
That to her Dwarfe, which had me in his charge,
She bad to lighten my too heaue band,
And graunt more scope to me to walke at large.
So on a day, as by the flowrie marge
Of a fresh streame I with that Elfe did play,
Finding no meanes how I might us enlarge,
But if that Dwarfe I could with me conuay,
I lightly snatcht him up and with me bore away.

“ Thereat he shriekt aloud, that with his cry 62
The Tyrant selfe came forth with yelling bray,
And me pursew'd ; but nathemore would I
Forgoe the purchase of my gotten pray,
But have perforce him hether brought away.”
Thus as they talked, loe ! where nigh at hand
Those Ladies two, yet doubtfull through dismay,
In presence came, desirous t' understand
Tydings of all which there had hapned on the land.

Where soone as sad Æmylia did espie 63
Her captive lovers friend, young Placidus,
All mindlesse of her wonted modestie
She to him ran, and him with streight embras
Enfolding, said ; “ And lives yet Amyas ? ”
“ He lives,” (quoth he) “ and his Æmylia loves.”
“ Then lesse,” (said she) “ by all the woe I pas,
With which my weaker patience fortune proves :
But what mishap thus long him fro my selfe removes ? ”

Then gan he all this storie to renew, 64
And tell the course of his captivitie ;
That her deare hart full deeply made to rew,
And sigh full sore to heare the miserie
In which so long he mercillesse did lie.
Then, after many teares and sorrowes spent,
She deare besought the Prince of remedie ;
Who thereto did with readie will consent,
And well perform'd ; as shall appeare by his event.



CANTO IX.

*The Squire of low degree, releast,
Pæana takes to wife:
Britomart fightes with many Knights;
Prince Arthur stints their strife.*

HARD is the doubt, and difficult to deeme, 1
When all three kinds of love together meet
And doe dispart the hart with powre extreme,
Whether shall weigh the balance downe; to weet,
The deare affection unto kindred sweet,
Or raging fire of love to womankind,
Or zeale of friends combynd with vertues meet:
But of them all the band of vertues mind,
Me seemes, the gentle hart should most assured bind.

For naturall affection soone doth cesse, 2
And quenched is with Cupids greater flame;
But faithfull friendship doth them both suppress,
And them with maystring discipline doth tame,
Through thoughts aspyring to eternall fame:
For as the soule doth rule the earthly masse,
And all the service of the bodie frame;
So love of soule doth love of bodie passe, [brasse.
No lesse then perfect gold surmounts the meanest

All which who list by tryall to assay 3
Shall in this storie find approved plaine;
In which these Squires true friendship more did sway
Then either care of parents could refraine,
Or love of fairest Ladie could constraine;
For though Pæana were as faire as morne,
Yet did this trustie squire with proud disdain
For his friends sake her offred favours scorne,
And she her selfe her syre of whom she was yborne.

Now, after that Prince Arthur graunted had 4
To yeeld strong succour to that gentle swayne,
Who now long time had lyen in prison sad;
He gan advise how best he mote darrayne
That enterprize for greatest glories gayne.
That headlesse tyrants tronke he reard from ground,
And, having ympt the head to it agayne,
Upon his usuall beast it firmly bound,
And made it so to ride as it alive was found.

Then did he take that chaced Squire, and layd 5
Before the ryder, as he captive were,
And made his Dwarfe, though with unwilling ayd,
To guide the beast that did his maister beare,
Till to his castle they approched neare;
Whom when the watch, that kept continuall ward,
Saw comming home, all voide of doubtfull feare
He, running downe, the gate to him unbard;
Whom straight the Prince ensuing in together far'd.

There did he find in her delitious boure 6
The faire Pæana playing on a Rote
Complayning of her cruell Paramoure,
And singing all her sorrow to the note,
As she had learned readily by rote;
That with the sweetnesse of her rare delight
The Prince halfe rapt began on her to dote;
Till better him bethinking of the right,
He her unwares attacht, and captive held by might.

Whence being forth produc'd, when she perceived 7
Her owne deare sire, she cald to him for aide;
But when of him no aunswere she received,
But saw him sencelesse by the Squire upstaide,
She weened well that then she was betraide:
Then gan she loudly cry, and weepe, and waile,
And that same Squire of treason to upbraide;
But all in vaine: her plaints might not prevaile,
Ne none there was to reskue her, ne none to baile.

Then tooke he that same Dwarfe, and him compeld 8
To open unto him the prison dore,
And forth to bring those thrals which there he held.
Thence forth were brought to him above a score
Of Knights and Squires to him unknowne afore:
All which he did from bitter bondage free,
And unto former liberty restore.
Amongst the rest that Squire of low degree
Came forth full weake and wan, not like himselfe to bee.

Whom soone as faire Æmylia beheld 9
And Placidus, they both unto him ran,
And him embracing fast betwixt them held,
Striving to comfort him all that they can,
And kissing oft his visage pale and wan:
That faire Pæana, them beholding both,
Gan both envy, and bitterly to ban;
Through jealous passion weeping inly wroth,
To see the sight perforce that both her eyes were loth.

But when awhile they had together beene, 10
And diversly conferred of their case,
She, though full oft she both of them had seene
Asunder, yet not ever in one place,
Began to doubt, when she them saw embrace,
Which was the captive Squire she lov'd so deare,
Deceived through great likenesse of their face:
For they so like in person did appeare,
That she uneath discerned whether whether weare.

And eke the Prince, when as he them avized, 11
Their like resemblaunce much admired there,
And mazd how nature had so well disguised
Her worke, and counterfet her selfe so nere,
As if that by one patterne, seene somewhere,
She had them made a paragone to be;
Or whether it through skill or errour were.
Thus gazing long at them much wondred he;
So did the other knights and Squires which him did see.

Then gan they ransacke that same Castle strong, 12
In which he found great store of hoorded threasure,
The which that tyrant gathered had by wrong
And tortious powre, without respect or measure :
Upon all which the Briton Prince made seasure,
And afterwards continu'd there a while
To rest him selfe, and solacé in soft pleasure
Those weaker Ladies after weary toile ;
To whom he did divide part of his purchast spoile.

And, for more joy, that captive Lady faire, 13
The faire Pæana, he enlarged free,
And by the rest did set in sumptuous chaire
To feast and frolicke : nathemore would she
Shew gladsome countenance nor pleasaunt glee ;
But grieved was for losse both of her sire,
And eke of Lordship with both land and fee ;
But most she touched was with griefe entire
For losse of her new love, the hope of her desire.

But her the Prince, through his well wonted grace, 14
To better termes of myldnesse did entreat
From that fowle rudenesse which did her deface ;
And that same bitter corsive, which did eat
Her tender heart and made refraine from meat,
He with good thewes and speaches well applyde
Did mollifie, and calme her raging heat :
For though she were most faire, and goodly dyde,
Yet she it all did mar with cruelty and pride.

And, for to shut up all in friendly love, 15
Sith love was first the ground of all her griefe,
That trusty Squire he wisely well did move
Not to despise that dame which lov'd him liefie,
Till he had made of her some better priefe ;
But to accept her to his wedded wife :
Thereto he offred for to make him chiefe
Of all her land and lordship during life.
He yeelded, and her tooke ; so stinted all their strife.

From that day forth in peace and joyous blis 16
They liv'd together long without debate;
Ne private jarre, ne spite of enemis,
Could shake the safe assuraunce of their state:
And she, whom Nature did so faire create
That she mote match the fairest of her daies,
Yet with lewd loves and lust intemperate
Had it defaste, thenceforth reformd her waies,
That all men much admyrde her change, and spake
her praise.

Thus when the Prince had perfectly compylde 17
These paires of friends in peace and settled rest,
Him selfe, whose minde did travell, as with chylde,
Of his old love conceav'd in secret brest,
Resolved to pursue his former quest;
And, taking leave of all, with him did beare
Faire Amoret, whom Fortune by bequest
Had left in his protection whileare,
Exchanged out of one into another feare.

Feare of her safety did her not constraine; 18
For well she wist now in a mighty hond
Her person, late in perill, did remaine,
Who able was all daungers to withstond:
But now in feare of shame she more did stond,
Seeing her selfe all soly succourlesse,
Left in the victors powre, like vassall bond,
Whose will her weakenesse could no way represse,
In case his burning lust should breake into excesse.

But cause of feare, sure, had she none at all 19
Of him, who goodly learned had of yore
The course of loose affection to forstall,
And lawlesse lust to rule with reasons lore;
That all the while he by his side her bore,
She was as safe as in a Sanctuary.
Thus many miles they two together wore,
To seeke their loves dispersed diversly;
Yet neither shewed to other their hearts privity.

At length they came whereas a troupe of Knights 20
They saw together skirmishing, as seemed.
Sixe they were all, all full of fell despight,
But foure of them the battell best beseemed,
That which of them was best mote not be deemed.
These foure were they from whom false Florimel
By Braggadochio lately was redeemed;
To weet, sterne Druon, and lewd Claribell,
Love-lavish Blandamour, and lustfull Paridell.

Druons delight was all in single life, 21
And unto Ladies love would lend no leasure :
The more was Claribell enraged rife
With fervent flames, and loved out of measure :
So eke lov'd Blandamour, but yet at pleasure
Would change his liking, and new Lemans prove ;
But Paridell of love did make no threasure,
But lusted after all that him did move.
'So diversly these foure disposed were to love.

But those two other, which beside them stooode, 22
Were Britomart and gentle Scudamour ;
Who all the while beheld their wrathfull moode,
And wondred at their impacable stoure,
Whose like they never saw till that same houre :
So dreadfull strokes each did at other drive,
And laid on load with all their might and powre,
As if that every dint the ghost would rive
Out of their wretched corses, and their lives deprive.

As when Dan Æolus, in great displeasure 23
For losse of his deare love by Neptune hent,
Sends forth the winds out of his hidden threasure
Upon the sea to wreake his fell intent ;
They breaking forth with rude unruliment
From all foure parts of heaven doe rage full sore,
And tosse the deepes, and teare the firmament,
And all the world confound with wide uprore ;
As if instead thereof they Chaos would restore.

Cause of their discord and so fell debate 24
Was for the love of that same snowy maid,
Whome they had lost in Turneyment of late;
And, seeking long, to weet which way she straid,
Met here together; where, through lewd upbraide
Of Ate and Duessa, they fell out;
And each one taking part in others aide
This cruell conflict raised thereabout,
Whose dangerous successe depended yet in doubt:

For sometimes Paridell and Blandamour 25
The better had, and bet the others backe;
Eftsoones the others did the field recoure,
And on their foes did worke full cruell wracke:
Yet neither would their fiendlike fury slacke,
But evermore their malice did augment;
Till that uneath they forced were, for lacke
Of breath, their raging rigour to relent,
And rest themselves for to recover spirits spent.

Then gan they change their sides, and new parts take;
For Paridell did take to Druons side,
For old despight which now forth newly brake
Gainst Blandamour, whom alwaies he envide;
And Blandamour to Claribell relide:
So all afresh gan former fight renew.
As when two Barkes, this caried with the tide,
That with the wind, contrary courses sew,
If wind and tide doe change their courses change anew.

Thenceforth they much more furiously gan fare, 27
As if but then the battell had begonne;
Ne helmets bright ne hawberks strong did spare,
That through the clifts the vermeil bloud out sponne,
And all adowne their riven sides did ronne.
Such mortall malice wonder was to see
In friends profest, and so great outrage donne;
But sooth is said, and tride in each degree,
Faint friends when they fall out most cruell fomen bee.

Thus they long while continued in fight ; 28
Till Scudamour and that same Briton maide
By fortune in that place did chance to light :
Whom soone as they with wrathfull eie bewraide,
They gan remember of the fowle upbraide,
The which that Britonesse had to them donne
In that late Turney for the snowy maide ;
Where she had them both shamefully fordonne,
And eke the famous prize of beauty from them wonne.

Eftsoones all burning with a fresh desire 29
Of fell revenge, in their malicious mood
They from them selves gan turne their furious ire,
And cruell blades, yet steeming with whot blood,
Against those two let drive, as they were wood :
Who wondring much at that so sodaine fit,
Yet nought dismayd, them stoutly well withstood ;
Ne yeelded foote, ne once abacke did flit,
But being doubly smitten likewise doubly smit.

The warlike Dame was on her part assaid 30
Of Claribell and Blandamour attone ;
And Paridell and Druon fiercely laid
At Scudamour, both his professed fone :
Foure charged two, and two surcharged one ;
Yet did those two them selves so bravely beare,
That th' other litle gained by the lone,
But with their owne repayed duely weare,
And usury withall : such gaine was gotten deare.

Full oftentimes did Britomart assay 31
To speake to them, and some emparlance move ;
But they for nought their cruell hands would stay,
Ne lend an eare to ought that might behove.
As when an eager mastiffe once doth prove
The tast of blood of some engored beast,
No words may rate, nor rigour him remove
From greedy hold of that his blouddy feast :
So, litle did they hearken to her sweet beheast.

Whom when the Briton Prince afarre beheld 32
With ods of so unequall match opprest,
His mighty heart with indignation sweld,
And inward grudge fild his heroicke brest.
Eftsoones him selfe he to their aide addrest,
And thrusting fierce into the thickest preace
Divided them, how ever loth to rest;
And would them faine from battell to surceasse,
With gentle words perswading them to friendly peace:

But they so farre from peace or patience were, 33
That all at once at him gan fiercely flie,
And lay on load, as they him downe would beare:
Like to a storme which hovers under skie,
Long here and there and round about doth stie,
At length breakes downe in raine, and haile, and sleet,
First from one coast, till nought thereof be drie,
And then another, till that likewise fleet;
And so from side to side till all the world it weet.

But now their forces greatly were decayd, 34
The Prince yet being fresh untoucht afore;
Who them with speaches milde gan first disswade
From such foule outrage, and them long forbore:
Till seeing them through suffrance hartned more,
Him selfe he bent their furies to abate,
And layd at them so sharpely and so sore,
That shortly them compelled to retrate,
And being brought in daunger to relent too late.

But now his courage being throughly fired, 35
He ment to make them know their follies prise,
Had not those two him instantly desired
T' asswage his wrath, and pardon their mesprise:
At whose request he gan him selfe advise
To stay his hand, and of a truce to treat
In milder tearmes, as list them to devise;
Mongst which the cause of their so cruell heat
He did them aske; who all that passed gan repeat:

And told at large how that same errant Knight, 36
To weet faire Britomart, them late had foyled
In open turney, and by wrongfull fight
Both of their publicke praise had them despoyled,
And also of their private loves beguyled,
Of two full hard to read the harder theft :
But she that wrongfull challenge soone assoyled,
And shew'd that she had not that Lady reft,
(As they suppos'd) but her had to her liking left.

To whom the Prince thus goodly well replied : 37
" Certes, sir Knight, ye seemen much to blame
To rip up wrong that battell once hath tried ;
Wherein the honor both of Armes ye shame,
And eke the love of Ladies foule defame ;
To whom the world this franchise ever yeelded,
That of their loves choise they might freedom clame,
And in that right should by all knights be shielded :
Gainst which, me seemes, this war ye wrongfully have
wielded."

" And yet" (quoth she) " a greater wrong remains : 38
For I thereby my former love have lost ;
Whom seeking ever since with endlesse paines
Hath me much sorrow and much travell cost :
Aye me, to see that gentle maide so tost !"
But Scudamour, then sighing deepe, thus saide ;
" Certes, her losse ought me to sorrow most,
Whose right she is, where ever she be straide,
Through many perils wonne, and many fortunes waide :

" For from the first that her I love profest, 39
Unto this houre, this present lucklesse howre,
I never joyed happinesse nor rest ;
But thus turmoild from one to other stowre
I wast my life, and doe my daies devowre
In wretched anguishe and incessant woe,
Passing the measure of my feeble powre ;
That living thus a wretch, and loving so,
I neither can my love ne yet my life forgo."

Then good Sir Claribell him thus bespake : 40
“ Now were it not, sir Scudamour, to you
Dislikefull paine so sad a taske to take,
Mote we entreat you, sith this gentle crew
Is now so well accorded all anew,
That as we ride together on our way,
Ye will recount to us in order dew
All that adventure which ye did assay
For that faire Ladies love : past perils well apay.”

So gan the rest him likewise to require ; 41
But Britomart did him importune hard
To take on him that paine : whose great desire
He glad to satisfie, him selfe prepar'd
To tell through what misfortune he had far'd
In that atchievement, as to him befell,
And all those daungers unto them declar'd ;
Which sith they cannot in this Canto well
Comprised be, I will them in another tell.



CANTO X.

*Scudamour doth his conquest tell
Of vertuous Amoret :
Great Venus Temple is describ'd ;
And lovers life forth set.*

“ **T**RUE he it said, what ever man it sayd, 1
That love with gall and hony doth abound ;
But if the one be with the other wayd,
For every dram of hony therein found,
A pound of gall doth over it redound :
That I too true by triall have approved ;
For since the day that first with deadly wound
My heart was launcht, and learned to have loved,
I never joyed howre, but still with care was moved.

“ And yet such grace is given them from above, 2
That all the cares and evill which they meet
May nought at all their settled mindes remove,
But seeme, gainst common sence, to them most sweet ;
As bosting in their martyrdome unmeet.
So all that ever yet I have endured
I count as nought, and tread downe under feet,
Since of my love at length I rest assured,
That to disloyalty she will not be allured.

“ Long were to tell the travell and long toile 3
Through which this shield of love I late have wonne,
And purchased this peerelesse beauties spoile,
That harder may be ended, then begonne :
But since ye so desire, your will be donne.
Then hearke, ye gentle knights and Ladies free,
My hard mishaps that ye may learne to shonne ;
For though sweet love to conquer glorious bee,
Yet is the paine thereof much greater then the fee.

“What time the fame of this renowned prise 4
Flew first abroad, and all mens eares possest,
I, having armes then taken, gan avise
To winne me honour by some noble gest,
And purchase me some place amongst the best.
I boldly thought, (so young mens thoughts are bold)
That this same brave emprize for me did rest,
And that both shield and she whom I behold
Might be my lucky lot ; sith all by lot we hold.

“So on that hard adventure forth I went, 5
And to the place of perill shortly came :
That was a temple faire and auncient,
Which of great mother Venus bare the name,
And farre renowned, through exceeding fame,
Much more then that which was in Paphos built,
Or that in Cyprus, both long since this same,
Though all the pillours of the one were guilt,
And all the others pavement were with yvory spilt.

“And it was seated in an Island strong, 6
Abounding all with delices most rare,
And wall'd by nature gainst invaders wrong,
That none mote have accesse, nor inward fare,
But by one way that passage did prepare.
It was a bridge ybuilt in goodly wize
With curious Corbes and pendants graven faire,
And arched all with porches did arize
On stately pillours fram'd after the Doricke guize.

“And for defence thereof on th' other end 7
There reared was a castle faire and strong,
That warded all which in or out did wend,
And flanked both the bridges sides along,
Gainst all that would it faine to force or wrong ;
And therein wonned twenty valiant Knights,
All twenty tride in warres experience long,
Whose office was against all manner wights
By all meanes to maintaine that castels ancient rights.

“ Before that Castle was an open plaine, 8
And in the midst thereof a piller placed ;
On which this shield, of many sought in vaine,
The shield of Love, whose guerdon me hath graced,
Was hangd on high with golden ribbands laced :
And in the marble stone was written this,
With golden letters goodly well enchaced ;
Blessed the man that well can use his blis :
Whose ever be the shield, fair Amoret be his.

“ Which when I red, my heart did inly earne, 9
And pant with hope of that adventures hap ;
Ne stayed further newes thereof to learne,
But with my speare upon the shield did rap,
That all the castle ringed with the clap.
Streight forth issewd a Knight all arm'd to prooffe,
And bravely mounted to his most mishap ;
Who, staying nought to question from aloofe,
Ran fierce at me that fire glaunst from his horses hoofe.

“ Whom boldly I encountred (as I could) 10
And by good fortune shortly him unseated.
Eftsoones outsprung two more of equall mould ;
But I them both with equall hap defeated.
So all the twenty I likewise entreated,
And left them groning there upon the plaine :
Then, preacing to the pillour, I repeated
The read thereof for guerdon of my paine,
And taking downe the shield with me did it retaine.

“ So forth without impediment I past, 11
Till to the Bridges utter gate I came ;
The which I found sure lockt and chained fast.
I knockt, but no man aunswred me by name ;
I cald, but no man answwred to my clame :
Yet I persever'd still to knocke and call ;
Till at the last I spide within the same.
Where one stood peeping through a crevis small,
To whom I cald aloud, halfe angry therewithall.

“That was to weete the Porter of the place, 12
Unto whose trust the charge thereof was lent :
His name was Doubt, that had a double face,
Th’ one forward looking, th’ other backward bent,
Therein resembling Janus auncient
Which hath in charge the ingate of the yeare :
And evermore his eyes about him went,
As if some proved perill he did feare,
Or did misdoubt some ill whose cause did not appeare.

“On th’ one side he, on th’ other sate Delay, 13
Behinde the gate, that none her might espy ;
Whose manner was all passengers to stay
And entertaine with her occasions sly :
Through which some lost great hope unheedily,
Which never they recover might againe ;
And others, quite excluded forth, did ly
Long languishing there in unpittied paine,
And seeking often entraunce afterwards in vaine.

“Me when as he had privily espide 14
Bearing the shield which I had conquerd late,
He kend it streight, and to me opened wide.
So in I past, and streight he closd the gate :
But being in, Delay in close awaite,
Caught hold on me, and thought my steps to stay,
Feigning full many a fond excuse to prate,
And time to steale, the threasure of mans day,
Whose smallest minute lost no riches render may.

“But by no meanes my way I would forslow 15
For ought that ever she could doe or say ;
But from my lofty steede dismounting low
Past forth on foote, beholding all the way
The goodly workes, and stones of rich assay,
Cast into sundry shapes by wondrous skill,
That like on earth no where I reckon may ;
And underneath, the river rolling still [will.
With murmure soft, that seem’d to serve the workmans

“ Thence forth I passed to the second gate, 16
The Gate of good desert, whose goodly pride
And costly frame were long here to relate.
The same to all stooode alwaies open wide ;
But in the Porch did evermore abide
An hideous Giant, dreadfull to behold,
That stopt the entraunce with his spacious stride,
And with the terroure of his countenance bold
Full many did affray, that else faine enter would.

“ His name was Daunger, dreaded over all, 17
Who day and night did watch and duely ward
From fearefull cowards entrance to forstall
And faint-heart-fooles, whom shew of perill hard
Could terrifie from Fortunes faire adward :
For oftentimes faint hearts, at first espiall
Of his grim face, were from approaching scard.
Unworthy they of grace, whom one deniall
Excludes from fairest hope withouten further trial.

“ Yet many doughty warriours, often tride 18
In greater perils to be stout and bold,
Durst not the sternnesse of his looke abide ;
But, soone as they his countenance did behold,
Began to faint, and feele their corage cold.
Againe, some other, that in hard assaies
Were cowards knowne, and litle count did hold,
Either through gifts, or guile, or such like waies,
Crept in by stouping low, or stealing of the kaies.

“ But I, though meanest man of many moe, 19
Yet much disdainning unto him to lout,
Or creepe betweene his legs, so in to goe,
Resolv'd him to assault with manhood stout,
And either beat him in, or drive him out.
Eftsoones, advauncing that enchaunted shield,
With all my might I gan to lay about :
Which when he saw, the glaive which he did wield
He gan forthwith t'avale, and way unto me yield.

“ So, as I entred, I did backward looke, 20
For feare of harme that might lie hidden there ;
And loe ! his hindparts, whereof heed I tooke,
Much more deformed, fearefull ugly were,
Then all his former parts did earst appere :
For hatred, murther, treason, and despight,
With many moe lay in ambushment there,
Awaiting to entrap the warelesse wight
Which did not them prevent with vigilant foresight.

“ Thus having past all perill, I was come 21
Within the compasse of that Islands space ;
The which did seeme, unto my simple doome,
The onely pleasant and delightfull place
That ever troden was of footings trace :
For all that nature by her mother wit
Could frame in earth, and forme of substance base,
Was there ; and all that nature did omit,
Art, playing second natures part, supplied it.

“ No tree, that is of count, in greenewood growes, 22
From lowest Juniper to Ceder tall ;
No flowre in field, that daintie odour throwes,
And deckes his branch with blossomes over all,
But there was planted, or grew naturall :
Nor sense of man so coy and curious nice,
But there mote find to please it selfe withall ;
Nor hart could wish for any queint device,
But there it present was, and did fraile sense entice.

“ In such luxurious plentie of all pleasure, 23
It seem'd a second paradise to ghesse,
So lavishly enricht with Natures threasure,
That if the happie soules which doe possesse
Th' Elysian fields and live in lasting blesse,
Should happen this with living eye to see,
They soone would loath their lesser happinesse,
And wish to life return'd againe to bee,
That in this joyous place they mote have joyance free.

“ Fresh shadowes, fit to shroud from sunny ray ; 24
Faire lawnds, to take the sunne in season dew ;
Sweet springs, in which a thousand Nymphs did play ;
Soft rombling brookes, that gentle slomber drew ;
High reared mounts, the lands about to vew ;
Low looking dales, disloignd from common gaze ;
Delightfull bowres, to solace lovers trew ;
False Labyrinthes, fond runners eyes to daze ;
All which by nature made did nature selfe amaze.

“ And all without were walkes and alleyes dight 25
With divers trees enrang'd in even ranks ;
And here and there were pleasant arbors pight,
And shadie seates, and sundry flowring bankes,
To sit and rest the walkers wearie shankes :
And therein thousand payres of lovers walkt,
Praying their god, and yeelding him great thanks,
Ne ever ought but of their true loves talkt,
Ne ever for rebuke or blame of any balkt.

“ All these together by themselves did sport 26
Their spotlesse pleasures and sweet loves content.
But, farre away from these, another sort
Of lovers lincked in true harts consent ;
Which loved not as these for like intent,
But on chast vertue grounded their desire,
Farre from all fraud or fayned blandishment ;
Which, in their spirits kindling zealous fire,
Brave thoughts and noble deedes did evermore aspire.

“ Such were great Hercules and Hyllus deare ; 27
Trew Jonathan and David trustie tryde ;
Stout Theseus and Pirithous his feare ;
Pylades and Orestes by his syde ;
Myld Titus and Gesippus without pryde ;
Damon and Pythias, whom death could not sever :
All these, and all that ever had bene tyde
In bands of friendship, there did live for ever ;
Whose lives although decay'd, yet loves decayed never.

" Which when as I, that never tasted blis 28
Nor happie howre, beheld with gazefull eye,
I thought there was none other heaven then this;
And gan their endlesse happinesse envye,
That being free from feare and gealosye
Might frankely there their loves desire possesse;
Whilest I, through paines and perlous jeopardie,
Was forst to seeke my lifes deare patronnesse:
Much dearer be the things which come through hard
distresse.

" Yet all those sights, and all that else I saw, 29
Might not my steps withhold, but that forthright
Unto that purposd place I did me draw,
Where as my love was lodged day and night,
The temple of great Venus, that is hight
The Queene of beautie, and of love the mother,
There worshipped of every living wight;
Whose goodly workmanship farre past all other
That ever were on earth, all were they set together.

" Not that same famous Temple of Diane, 30
Whose hight all Ephesus did oversee,
And which all Asia sought with vowes prophane,
One of the worlds seven wonders sayd to bee,
Might match with this by many a degree:
Nor that which that wise King of Jurie framed
With endlesse cost to be th' Almightyes see;
Nor all, that else through all the world is named
To all the heathen Gods, might like to this be clamed.

" I, much admyring that so goodly frame, 31
Unto the porch approcht, which open stood;
But therein sate an amiable Dame,
That seem'd to be of very sober mood,
And in her semblant shew'd great womanhood:
Strange was her tyre; for on her head a crowne
She wore, much like unto a Danisk hood,
Poudred with pearle and stone; and all her gowne.
Enwoven was with gold, that raught full low adowne

“ On either side of her two young men stood, 32
Both strongly arm'd, as fearing one another ;
Yet were they brethren both of halfe the blood,
Begotten by two fathers of one mother,
Though of contrarie natures each to other :
The one of them hight Love, the other Hate ;
Hate was the elder, Love the younger brother ;
Yet was the younger stronger in his state
Then th' elder, and him maystred still in all debate.

“ Nathlesse that Dame so well them tempred both, 33
That she them forced hand to joyne in hand,
Albe that Hatred was thereto full loth,
And turn'd his face away, as he did stand,
Unwilling to behold that lovely band :
Yet she was of such grace and vertuous might,
That her commaundment he could not withstand,
But bit his lip for felonous despight,
And gnasht his yron tuskes at that displeasing sight.

“ Concord she cleeped was in common reed, 34
Mother of blessed Peace and Friendship trew ;
They both her twins, both borne of heavenly seed,
And she her selfe likewise divinely grew ;
The which right well her workes divine did shew :
For strength and wealth and happinesse she lends,
And strife and warre and anger does subdew ;
Of litle much, of foes she maketh frends,
And to afflicted minds sweet rest and quiet sends.

“ By her the heaven is in his course contained, 35
And all the world in state unmoved stands,
As their Almighty maker first ordained,
And bound them with inviolable bands ;
Else would the waters overflow the lands,
And fire devoure the ayre, and hell them quight,
But that she holds them with her blessed hands.
She is the nourse of pleasure and delight,
And unto Venus grace the gate doth open right.

“ By her I entring half dismayed was ; 36
But she in gentle wise me entertayned,
And twixt her selfe and Love did let me pas ;
But Hatred would my entrance have restrayned,
And with his club me threatned to have brayned,
Had not the Ladie with her powrefull speach
Him from his wicked will uneath refrayned ;
And th’ other eke his malice did empeach,
Till I was throughly past the perill of his reach.

“ Into the inmost Temple thus I came, 37
Which fuming all with frankensence I found
And odours rising from the altars flame.
Upon an hundred marble pillors round
The roof up high was reared from the ground, [gay,
All deckt with crownes, and chaynes, and girlands
And thousand pretious gifts worth many a pound,
The which sad lovers for their vowes did pay ;
And all the ground was strow’d with flowres as fresh
as May.

“ An hundred Altars round about were set, 38
All flaming with their sacrifices fire,
That with the steme therof the Temple swet,
Which rould in clouds to heaven did aspire,
And in them bore true lovers vowes entire :
And eke an hundred brasen caudrons bright,
To bath in joy and amorous desire,
Every of which was to a damzell hight ;
For all the Priests were damzels in soft linnen dight.

“ Right in the midst the Goddesse selfe did stand 39
Upon an altar of some costly masse,
Whose substance was uneath to understand :
For neither pretious stone, nor durefull brasse,
Nor shining gold, nor mouldring clay it was ;
But much more rare and pretious to esteeme,
Pure in aspect, and like to christall glasse,
Yet glasse was not, if one did rightly deeme ;
But, being faire and brickle, likest glasse did seeme.

“ But it in shape and beautie did excell 40
All other Idoles which the heathen adore,
Farre passing that, which by surpassing skill
Phidias did make in Paphos Isle of yore,
With which that wretched Greeke, that life forlore,
Did fall in love : yet this much fairer shined,
But covered with a slender veile afore ;
And both her feete and legs together twyned
Were with a snake, whose head and tail were fast
combyned.

“ The cause why she was covered with a vele 41
Was hard to know, for that her Priests the same
From peoples knowledge labour'd to concele :
But sooth it was not sure for womanish shame,
Nor any blemish which the worke mote blame ;
But for, they say, she hath both kinds in one,
Both male and female, both under one name :
She syre and mother is her selfe alone,
Begets and eke conceives, ne needeth other none.

“ And all about her necke and shoulders flew 42
A flocke of litle loves, and sports, and joyes,
With nimble wings of gold and purple hew ;
Whose shapes seem'd not like to terrestriall boyes,
But like to Angels playing heavenly toyes,
The whilest their eldest brother was away,
Cupid their eldest brother : he enjoys
The wide kingdomè of love with Lordly sway,
And to his law compels all creatures to obey.

“ And all about her altar scattered lay 43
Great sorts of lovers piteously complayning,
Some of their losse, some of their loves delay,
Some of their pride, some paragons disdayning,
Some fearing fraud, some fraudulently fayning,
As every one had cause of good or ill. [strayning
Amongst the rest some one, through Loves con-
Tormented sore, could not containe it still,
But thus brake forth, that all the temple it did fill.

“ ‘ Great Venus! Queene of beautie and of grace, 44
‘ The joy of Gods and men, that under skie
‘ Doest fayrest shine, and most adorne thy place ;
‘ That with thy smyling looke doest pacifie
‘ The raging seas, and makst the stormes to flie :
‘ Thee, goddesse, thee the winds, the clouds doe feare ;
‘ And, when thou spreadst thy mantle forth on hie,
‘ The waters play, and pleasant lands appeare,
‘ And heavens laugh, and al the world shews joyous
cheare.

“ ‘ Then doth the dædale earth throw forth to thee 45
‘ Out of her fruitfull lap abundant flowres ;
‘ And then all living wights, soone as they see
‘ The spring breake forth out of his lusty bowres,
‘ They all doe learne to play the Paramours :
‘ First doe the merry birds, thy pretty pages,
‘ Privily pricked with thy lustfull powres,
‘ Chirpe loud to thee out of their leavy cages,
‘ And thee their mother call to coole their kindly rages.

“ ‘ Then doe the salvage beasts begin to play 46
‘ Their pleasant friskes, and loath their wonted food :
‘ The Lyons rore ; the Tygres loudly bray ;
‘ The raging Bulls rebellow through the wood,
‘ And breaking forth dare tempt the deepest flood,
‘ To come where thou doest draw them with desire.
‘ So all things else, that nourish vitall blood,
‘ Soone as with fury thou doest them inspire,
‘ In generation seeke to quench their inward fire.

“ ‘ So all the world by thee at first was made, 47
‘ And dayly yet thou doest the same repayre ;
‘ Ne ought on earth that merry is and glad,
‘ Ne ought on earth that lovely is and fayre,
‘ But thou the same for pleasure didst prepayre :
‘ Thou art the root of all that joyous is :
‘ Great God of men and women, queene of th’ ayre,
‘ Mother of laughter, and welspring of blisse,
‘ O graunt that of my love at last I may not misse !’

“ So did he say ; but I with murmure soft, 48
That none might heare the sorrow of my hart,
Yet inly groning deepe and sighing oft,
Besought her to graunt ease unto my smart,
And to my wound her gracious help impart.
Whilest thus I spake, behold ! with happy eye
I spyde where at the Idoles feet apart
A bevie of fayre damzels close did lye,
Wayting when as the Antheme should be sung on hye.

“ The first of them did seeme of ryper yeares 49
And graver countenance then all the rest ;
Yet all the rest were eke her equall peares,
Yet unto her obeyed all the best :
Her name was Womanhood ; that she exprest
By her sad semblant and demeanure wyse,
For stedfast still her eyes did fixed rest,
Ne rov'd at randon, after gazers guyse,
Whose luring baytes oftimes doe heedlesse harts entyse.

“ And next to her sate goodly Shamefastnesse, 50
Ne ever durst her eyes from ground upreare,
Ne ever once did looke up from her desse,
As if some blame of evill she did feare,
That in her cheekes made roses oft appeare :
And her against sweet Cherefulnesse was placed,
Whose eyes, like twinkling stars in evening cleare,
Were deckt with smyles that all sad humors chaced,
And darted forth delights the which her goodly graded.

“ And next to her sate sober Modestie, 51
Holding her hand upon her gentle hart ;
And her against sate comely Curtesie,
That unto every person knew her part ;
And her before was seated overthwart
Soft Silence, and submisse Obedience,
Both linckt together never to dispart ;
Both gifts of God, not gotten but from thence ;
Both girlonds of his Saints against their foes offence.

" Thus sate they all around in seemely rate : 52
And in the midst of them a goodly mayd,
Even in the lap of Womanhood there sate,
The which was all in lilly white arayd,
With silver streames amongst the linnen stray'd ;
Like to the Morne, when first her shyning face
Hath to the gloomy world itself bewray'd :
That same was fayrest Amoret in place, [grace.
Shyning with beauties light and heavenly vertues

" Whom soone as I beheld, my hart gan throb 53
And wade in doubt what best were to be donne ;
For sacrilege me seem'd the Church to rob,
And folly seem'd to leave the thing undonne
Which with so strong attempt I had begonne,
Tho, shaking off all doubt and shamefast feare,
Which Ladies love, I heard, had never wonne
Mongst men of worth, I to her stepped neare,
And by the lilly hand her labour'd up to reare.

" Thereat that formost matrone me did blame, 54
And sharpe rebuke for being over bold ;
Saying, it was to Knight unseemely shame
Upon a recluse Virgin to lay hold,
That unto Venus services was sold.
To whom I thus : ' Nay, but it fitteth best
For Cupids man with Venus mayd to hold ;
For ill your goddessse services are drest
By virgins, and her sacrifices let to rest.'

" With that my shield I forth to her did show, 55
Which all that while I closely had conceld ;
On which when Cupid, with his killing bow
And cruell shafts, emblazond she beheld,
At sight thereof she was with terror queld,
And said no more : but I, which all that while
The pledge of faith, her hand, engaged held,
Like warie hynd within the weedie soyle,
For no intreatie would forgoe so glorious spoyle.

“ And evermore upon the Goddesse face 56
Mine eye was fixt, for feare of her offence;
Whom when I saw with amiable grace
To laugh at me, and favour my pretence,
I was emboldned with more confidence;
And nought for nicenesse nor for envy sparing,
In presence of them all forth led her thence,
All looking on, and like astonisht staring,
Yet to lay hand on her not one of all them daring.

“ She often prayd, and often me besought, 57
Sometime with tender teares to let her goe,
Sometime with witching smyles; but yet, for nought
That ever she to me could say or doe,
Could she her wished freedome fro me wooe:
But forth I led her through the Temple gate,
By which I hardly past with much adoe;
But that same Ladie, which me friended late
In entrance, did me also friend in my retrate.

“ No lesse did Daunger threaten me with dread, 58
Whenas he saw me, maugre all his powre,
That glorious spoyle of beautie with me lead,
Then Cerberus, when Orpheus did recoure
His Leman from the Stygian Princes boure:
But evermore my shield did me defend
Against the storme of every dreadfull stoure:
Thus safely with my Love I thence did wend.”
So ended he his tale, where I this Canto end.

CANTO XI.

*Marinells former wound is heald ;
 he comes to Proteus hall,
 Where Thames doth the Medway wedd,
 and feasts the Sea-gods all.*

BUT ah for pittie ! that I have thus long 1
 Left a fayre Ladie languishing in payne :
 Now well away ! that I have doen such
 wrong,

To let faire Florimell in bands remayne,
 In bands of love, and in sad thralldomes chayne ;
 From which, unlesse some heavenly powre her free
 By miracle, not yet appearing playne,
 She lenger yet is like captiv'd to bee ;
 That even to thinke thereof it inly pitties mee.

Here neede you to remember, how erewhile 2
 Unlovely Proteus, missing to his mind
 That Virgins love to win by wit or wile,
 Her threw into a dongeon deepe and blind,
 And there in chaynes her cruelly did bind,
 In hope thereby her to his bent to draw :
 For, when as neither gifts nor graces kind
 Her constant mind could move at all he saw,
 He thought her to compell by crueltie and awe.

Deepe in the bottome of an huge great rocke 3
 The dongeon was, in which her bound he left,
 That neither yron barres, nor brasen locke,
 Did neede to gard from force, or secret theft
 Of all her lovers which would her have reft :
 For wall'd it was with waves, which rag'd and ror'd
 As they the cliffe in peeces would have cleft ;
 Besides, ten thousand monsters foule, abhor'd,
 Did waite about it, gaping, griesly, all begor'd.

And in the midst thereof did horror dwell, 4
And darknesse dredd that never viewed day,
Like to the balefull house of lowest hell,
In which old Styx her aged bones alway,
Old Styx the Grandame of the Gods, doth lay.
There did this lucklesse mayd seven months abide,
Ne ever evening saw, ne mornings ray,
Ne ever from the day the night descride,
But thought it all one night that did no houres divide.

And all this was for love of Marinell, 5
Who her despyd (ah! who would her despyse?)
And wemens love did from his hart expell,
And all those joyes that weake mankind entyse.
Nathlesse his pride full dearely he did pryse;
For of a womans hand it was ywroke,
That of the wound he yet in languor lyes,
Ne can be cured of that cruell stroke
Which Britomart him gave, when he did her provoke.

Yet farre and neare the Nymph his mother sought, 6
And many salves did to his sore applie,
And many herbes did use. But when as nought,
She saw, could ease his rankling maladie,
At last to Tryphon she for helpe did hie,
(This Tryphon is the seagods surgeon hight,)
Whom she besought to find some remedie,
And for his paines a whistle him behight,
That of a fishes shell was wrought with rare delight.

So well that Leach did hearke to her request, 7
And did so well employ his carefull paine,
That in short space his hurts he had redrest,
And him restor'd to healthfull state againe:
In which he long time after did remaine
There with the Nymph his mother, like her thrall;
Who sore against his will did him retaine,
For feare of perill which to him mote fall
Through his too ventrous prowesse proved over all.

It fortun'd then, a solemne feast was there 8
To all the Sea-gods and their fruitfull seede,
In honour of the spousalls which then were
Betwixt the Medway and the Thames agreed.
Long had the Thames (as we in records reed)
Before that day her wooed to his bed,
But the proud Nymph would for no worldly meed,
Nor no entreatie, to his love be led ;
Till now, at last relenting, she to him was wed.

So both agreed that this their bridale feast 9
Should for the Gods in Proteus house be made ;
To which they all repayr'd, both most and least,
Aswell which in the mightie Ocean trade,
As that in rivers swim, or brookes doe wade :
All which, not if an hundred tongues to tell,
And hundred mouthes, and voice of brasse I had,
And endlesse memorie that mote excell,
In order as they came could I recount them well.

Helpe, therefore, O ! thou sacred imp of Jove, 10
The noursling of Dame Memorie his deare,
To whom those rolles, layd up in heaven above,
And records of antiquitie appeare,
To which no wit of man may comen neare ;
Helpe me to tell the names of all those floods
And all those Nymphes, which then assembled were
To that great banquet of the watry Gods,
And all their sundry kinds, and all their hid abodes.

First came great Neptune, with his threeforkt mace,
That rules the Seas and makes them rise or fall ;
His dewy lockes did drop with brine apace
Under his Diademe imperiall :
And by his side his Queene with coronall,
Faire Amphitrite, most divinely faire,
Whose yvorie shoulders weren covered all,
As with a robe, with her owne silver haire, [paire.
And deckt with pearles which th' Indian seas for her pre-

These marched farre afore the other crew : 12
And all the way before them, as they went,
Triton his trompet shrill before them blew,
For goodly triumph and great jollyment,
That made the rockes to roare as they were rent.
And after them the royall issue came,
Which of them sprung by lineall descent :
First the Sea-gods, which to themselves doe clame
The powre to rule the billowes, and the waves to tame.

Phorceys, the father of that fatall brood, 13
By whom those old Heroes wonne such fame ;
And Glaucus, that wise southsayer understood ;
And tragicke Inoes sonne, the which became
A God of seas through his mad mothers blame,
Now hight Palemon, and is saylers frend ;
Great Brontes ; and Astræus, that did shame
Himselfe with incest of his kin unkend ;
And huge Orion, that doth tempests still portend ;

The rich Cteatus ; and Eurytus long ; 14
Neleus and Pelias, lovely brethren both ;
Mightie Chrysaor ; and Caïcus strong ;
Eurypulus, that calmes the waters wroth ;
And faire Euphæmus, that upon them go'th
As on the ground, without dismay or dread ;
Fierce Eryx ; and Alebius, that know'th
The waters depth, and doth their bottome tread ;
And sad Asopus, comely with his hoarie head.

There also some most famous founders were 15
Of puissant Nations which the world possest,
Yet sonnes af Neptune, now assembled here :
Ancient Ogyges, even th' auncientest ;
And Inachus renowmd above the rest ;
Phœnix ; and Aon ; and Pelasgus old ;
Great Belus ; Phœax ; and Agenor best ;
And mightie Albion, father of the bold
And warlike people which the Britaine Islands hold :

For Albion the sonne of Neptune was ; 16
Who, for the prooffe of his great puissance,
Out of his Albion did on dry-foot pas
Into old Gall, that now is cleeped France,
To fight with Hercules, that did advance
To vanquish all the world with matchlesse might ;
And there his mortall part by great mischance
Was slaine; but that which is th' immortall spright
Lives still, and to this feast with Neptunes seed was dight.

But what doe I their names seeke to reherse, 17
Which all the world have with their issue fild ?
How can they all in this so narrow verse
Contayned be, and in small compasse hild ?
Let them record them that are better skild,
And know the moniments of passed age
Onely what needeth shall be here fulfild,
T' expresse some part of that great equipage
Which from great Neptune do derive their parentage.

Next came the aged Ocean and his Dame 18
Old Tethys, th' oldest two of all the rest ;
For all the rest of those two parents came,
Which afterward both sea and land possest ;
Of all which Nereus, th' eldest and the best,
Did first proceed ; then which none more upright,
Ne more sincere in word and 'deed profest ;
Most voide of guile, most free from fowle despight,
Doing him selfe, and teaching others to doe right.

Thereto he was expert in prophecies, 19
And could the ledden of the gods unfold ; [prise,
Through which, when Paris brought his famous
The faire Tindarid lasse, he him foretold
That her all Greece with many a champion bold
Should fetch againe, and finally destroy
Proud Priams towne. So wise is Nereus old,
And so well skild ; nathlesse he takes great joy
Oft-times amongst the wanton Nymphs to sport and
toy.

And after him the famous rivers came, 20

Which doe the earth enrich and beautifie ;
The fertile Nile, which creatures new doth frame ;
Long Rhodanus, whose sourse springs from the skie ;
Faire Ister, flowing from the mountaines hie ;
Divine Scamander, purpled yet with blood
Of Greeks and Trojans which therein did die ;
Pactolus glistring with his golden flood ; [stood ;
And Tygris fierce, whose streames of none may be with-

Great Ganges ; and immortall Euphrates ; 21

Deepe Indus ; and Mæander intricate ;
Slow Peneus ; and tempestuous Phasides ;
Swift Rhene ; and Alpheus still immaculate ;
Ooraxes, feared for great Cyrus fate ;
Tybris, renowned for the Romaines fame ;
Rich Oranochy, though but knowen late ;
And that huge River, which doth beare his name
Of warlike Amazons, which doe possesse the same.

Joy on those warlike women, which so long 22

Can from all men so rich a kingdome hold !
And shame on you, O men ! which boast your strong
And valiant hearts, in thoughts lesse hard and bold,
Yet quaille in conquest of that land of gold.
But this to you, O Britons ! most pertaines,
To whom the right hereof it selfe hath sold,
The which, for sparing litle cost or paines,
Loose so immortall glory, and so endlesse gaines.

Then was there heard a most celestiall sound 23

Of dainty musicke, which did next ensew
Before the spouse : that was Arion crownd ;
Who, playing on his harpe, unto him drew
The eares and hearts of all that goodly crew ;
That even yet the Dolphin, which him bore
Through the Agæan seas from Pirates vew,
Stood still by him astonisht at his lore,
And all the raging seas for joy forgot to rore.

So went he playing on the watery plaine : 24
Soone after whom the lovely Bridegroome came,
The noble Thamys, with all his goodly traine ;
But him before there went, as best became,
His auncient parents, namely th' auncient Thame :
But much more aged was his wife then he,
The Ouze, whom men doe Isis rightly name.
Full weake and crooked creature seemed shee, [see.
And almost blind through eld, that scarce her way could

Therefore on either side she was sustained 25
Of two smal grooms, which by their names were hight
The Churne and Charwell, two small streames, which
Them selves her footing to direct aright, [pained
Which fayled oft through faint and feeble plight :
But Thame was stronger and of better stay ;
Yet seem'd full aged by his outward sight,
With head all hoary, and his beard all gray,
Deawed with silver drops that trickled downe alway.

And eke he somewhat seem'd to stoupe afore 26
With bowed backe, by reason of the lode
And auncient heavy burden which he bore
Of that faire City, wherein make abode
So many learned impes, that shoote abroad,
And with their braunches spred all Britany,
No lesse than do her elder sisters broode.
Joy to you both, ye double nursery
Of Arts ! but, Oxford, thine doth Thame most glorify.

But he their sonne full fresh and jolly was, 27
All decked in a robe of watchet hew,
On which the waves, glittering like Christall glas,
So cunningly enwoven were, that few
Could weenen whether they were false or trew :
And on his head like to a Coronet
He wore, that seemed strange to common vew,
In which were many towres and castels set,
That it encompass round as with a golden fret.

Like as the mother of the Gods, they say, 28
 In her great iron charet wonts to ride,
 When to Joves pallace she doth take her way,
 Old Cybele, arayd with pompous pride,
 Wearing a Diademe embattild wide
 With hundred turrets, like a Turribant;
 With such an one was Thamys beautifide;
 That was to weete the famous Troynovant,
 In which her kingdomes throne is chiefly resiant.

And round about him many a pretty Page 29
 Attended duely, ready to obay;
 All little Rivers which owe vassallage
 To him, as to their Lord, and tribute pay:
 The chaulky Kenet; and the Thetis gray;
 The morish Cole; and the soft sliding Breane;
 The wanton Lee, that oft doth loose his way;
 And the still Darent, in whose waters cleane
 Ten thousand fishes play and decke his pleasant streame.

Then came his neighbour flouds which nigh him dwell,
 And water all the English soile throughout:
 They all on him this day attended well,
 And with meet service waited him about,
 Ne none disdained low to him to lout;
 No, not the stately Severne grudg'd at all,
 Ne storming Humber, though he looked stout;
 But both him honor'd as their principall,
 And let their swelling waters low before him fall.

There was the speedy Tamar, which devides 31
 The Cornish and the Devonish confines;
 Through both whose borders swiftly downe it glides,
 And, meeting Plim, to Plimmouth thence declines:
 And Dart, nigh chockt with sands of tinny mines:
 But Avon marched in more stately path,
 Proud of his Adamants with which he shines
 And glisters wide, as als of wondrous Bath,
 And Bristow faire, which on his waves he builded hath

And there came Stoure with terrible aspect, 32
Bearing his sixe deformed heads on hye,
That doth his course through Blandford plains direct,
And washeth Winborne meades in season drye.
Next him went Wylibourne with passage slye,
That of his wylinesse his name doth take,
And of him selfe doth name the shire thereby :
And Mole, that like a nousling Mole doth make
His way still under ground, till Thamys he overtake.

Then came the Rother, decked all with woods 33
Like a wood God, and flowing fast to Rhy ;
And Sture, that parteth with his pleasant floods
The Easterne Saxons from the Southerne ny,
And Clare and Harwitch both doth beautify :
Him follow'd Yar, soft washing Norwitch wall,
And with him brought a present joyfully
Of his owne fish unto their festivall, [call.
Whoselike none else could shew, the which they Ruffins

Next these the plenteous Ouse came far from land, 34
By many a city and by many a towne,
And many rivers taking under hand
Into his waters as he passeth downe,
The Cle, the Were, the Guant, the Sture, the Rowne.
Thence doth by Huntingdon and Cambridge flit,
My mother Cambridge, whom as with a Crowne
He doth adorne, and is adorn'd of it
With many a gentle Muse and many a learned wit.

And after him the fatall Welland went, 35
That, if old sawes prove true (which God forbid!)
Shall drowne all Holland with his excrement,
And shall see Stamford, though now homely hid,
Then shine in learning, more then ever did
Cambridge or Oxford, Englands goodly beames.
And next to him the Nene downe softly slid ;
And bounteous Trent, that in him selfe enseames
Both thirty sorts of fish, and thirty sundry streames.

Next these came Tyne, along whose stony bancke 36
That Romaine Monarch built a brasen wall,
Which mote the feebled Britons strongly flancke
Against the Picts that swarmed over all,
Which yet thereof Gualsever they doe call :
And Twede, the limit betwixt Logris land
And Albany: And Eden, though but small,
Yet often stainde with bloud of many a band
Of Scots and English both, that tynd on his strand.

Then came those sixe sad brethren, like forlorne, 37
That whilome were (as antique fathers tell)
Sixe valiant Knights of one faire Nymphe yborne,
Which did in noble deedes of armes excell,
And wonned there where now Yorke people dwell;
Still Ure, swift Werfe, and Oze the most of might,
High Swale, unquiet Nide, and troublous Skell ;
All whom a Scythian king, that Humber hight,
Slew cruelly, and in the river drowned quite.

But past not long ere Brutus warlicke sonne, 38
Locrinus, them aveng'd, and the same date,
Which the proud Humber unto them had donne,
By equall dome repayd on his owne pate :
For in the selfe same river, where he late
Had drenched them, he drowned him againe,
And nam'd the river of his wretched fate ;
Whose bad condition yet it doth retaine,
Oft tossed with his stormes which therein still remaine.

These after came the stony shallow Lone, 39
That to old Loncaster his name doth lend;
And following Dee, which Britons long ygone
Did call divine, that doth by Chester tend ;
And Conway, which out of his streame doth send
Plenty of pearles to decke his dames withall ;
And Lindus that his pikes doth most commend,
Of which the auncient Lincolne men doe call.
All these together marched toward Proteus hall.

Ne thence the Irishe Rivers absent were : 40
Sith no lesse famous then the rest they bee,
And joyne in neighbourhood of kingdome nere,
Why should they not likewise in love agree,
And joy likewise this solemne day to see ?
They saw it all, and present were in place ;
Though I them all according their degree
Cannot recount, nor tell their hidden race,
Nor read the salvage cuntries thorough which they pace.

There was the Liffy rolling downe the lea ; 41
The sandy Slane ; the stony Aubrian ;
The spacious Shenan spreading like a sea ;
The pleasant Boyne ; the fishy fruitfull Ban ;
Swift Awniduff, which of the English man
Is cal'de Blackewater ; and the Liffar deep ;
Sad Trowis, that once his people overran ;
Strong Allo tombling from Slewlogher steep ;
And Mulla mine, whose waves I whilom taught to weep.

And there the three renowned brethren were, 42
Which that great Gyant Blomius begot
Of the faire Nymph Rheusa wandring there.
One day, as she to shunne the season whot
Under Slewboome in shady grove was got,
This Gyant found her and by force deflowr'd ;
Whereof conceiving, she in time forth brought
These three faire sons, which being thenceforth powrd
In three great rivers ran, and many cuntries scowrd.

The first the gentle Shure that, making way 43
By sweet Clonmell, adornes rich Waterford ;
The next, the stubborne Newre whose waters gray
By faire Kilkenny and Rosseponte boord ;
The third, the goodly Barow which doth hoord
Great heapes of salmons in his deepe bosome :
All which, long sundred, doe at last accord
To joyne in one, ere to the sea they come ;
So, flowing all from one, all one at last become.

There also was the wide embayed Mayre; 44
 The pleasaunt Bandon crownd with many a wood;
 The spreading Lee that, like an Island fayre,
 Encloseth Corke with his devided flood;
 And balefull Oure, late staine with English blood,
 With many more whose names no tongue can tell;
 All which that day in order seemly good
 Did on the Thamys attend, and waited well
 To doe their dueful service, as to them befell.

Then came the Bride, the lovely Medua came, 45
 Clad in a vesture of unknowen geare
 And uncouth fashion, yet her well became,
 That seem'd like silver, sprinkled here and there
 With glittering spangs that did like starres appeare,
 And wav'd upon, like water Chamelot,
 To hide the metall, which yet every where
 Bewrayd it selfe, to let men plainly wot
 It was no mortall worke, that seem'd and yet was not.

Her goodly lockes adowne her backe did flow 46
 Unto her waste, with flowres bescattered,
 The which ambrosiall odours forth did throw
 To all about, and all her shoulders spred
 As a new spring; and likewise on her hed
 A Chapelet of sundry flowers she wore,
 From under which the deawy humour shed
 Did tricle downe her haire, like to the hore
 Congealed litle drops which doe the morne adore.

On her two pretty handmaides did attend, 47
 One cald the Theise, the other cald the Crane,
 Which on her waited things amisse to mend,
 And both behind upheld her spredding traine;
 Under the which her feet appeared plaine,
 Her silver feet, faire washt against this day:
 And her before there paced Pages twaine,
 Both clad in colours like, and like array, [way.
 The Doune and eke the Frith, both which prepar'd her

And after these the Sea Nymphs marched all, 48
 All goodly damzels, deckt with long greene haire,
 Whom of their sire Nereides men call,
 All which the Oceans daughter to him bare,
 The gray eyde Doris ; all which fifty are,
 All which she there on her attending had :
 Swift Proto ; milde Eucrate ; Thetis faire ;
 Soft Spio ; sweete Endore ; Sao sad ;
 Light Doto ; wanton Glauce ; and Galene glad ;

White hand Eunica ; proud Dynamene ; 49
 Joyous Thalia ; goodly Amphitrite ;
 Lovely Pasithee ; kinde Eulimene ;
 Lightfoote Cymothoe ; and sweete Melite ;
 Fairest Pherusa ; Phao lilly white ;
 Wondred Agavè ; Poris ; and Nesæa ;
 With Erato that doth in love delite ;
 And Panopæ ; and wise Protomedæa ;
 And snowy neckd Doris ; and milkewhite Galathæa ;

Speedy Hippothoe ; and chaste Actea ; 50
 Large Lisianassa ; and Pronæa sage ;
 Euagore ; and light Pontoporea ;
 And she that with her least word can asswage
 The surging seas, when they do sorest rage,
 Cymodoce ; and stout Autonoe ;
 And Neso ; and Eione well in âge ;
 And, seeming still to smile, Glauconome ;
 And she that hight of many heastes Polynome ;

Fresh Alimeda deckt with girlond greene ; 51
 Hyponeo with salt bedewed wrests ;
 Laomedia like the christall sheene ;
 Liagore much praisd for wise behests ;
 And Psamathe for her brode snowy breasts ;
 Cymo ; Eupompe ; and Themiste just ;
 And, she that vertue loves and vice detests,
 Euarna ; and Menippe true in trust ;
 And Nemertea learned well to rule her lust.

All these the daughters of old Nereus were, 52
Which have the sea in charge to them assinde,
To rule his tides, and surges to uprere,
To bring forth stormes, or fast them to upbinde,
And sailers save from wreckes of wrathfull winde.
And yet, besides, three thousand more there were
Of th' Oceans seede, but Joves and Phœbus kinde;
The which in floods and fountaines doe appere,
And all mankinde do nourish with their waters clere.

The which, more eath it were for mortall wight 53
To tell the sands, or count the starres on hye,
Or ought more hard, then thinke to reckon right.
But well I wote that these, which I descry,
Were present at this great solemnity:
And there, amongst the rest, the mother was
Of lucklesse Marinell, Cymodoce;
Which, for my Muse her selfe now tyred has,
Unto an other Canto I will overpas.



CANTO XII.

*Marin for love of Florimell
In languor wastes his life :
The Nymph, his mother, getteth her
And gives to him for wife.*

 ! WHAT an endlesse worke have I in hand,
To count the seas abundant progeny, [land,
Whose fruitfull seede farre passeth those in
And also those which wonne in th' azure sky :
For much more eath to tell the starres on hy,
Albe they endlesse seeme in estimation,
Then to recount the Seas posterity :
So fertile be the flouds in generation,
Sohuge their numbers, and so numberlesse their nation.

Therefore the antique wisards well invented
That Venus of the fomy sea was bred,
For that the seas by her are most augmented :
Witnesse th' exceeding fry which there are fed,
And wondrous sholes which may of none be red.
Then, blame me not if I have erp'd in count
Of Gods, of Nymphs, of rivers, yet unred ;
For though their numbers do much more surmount,
Yet all those same were there which erst I did recount.

All those were there, and many other more, 3
Whose names and nations were too long to tell,
That Proteus house they fild even to the dore ;
Yet were they all in order, as befell,
According their degrees disposed well.
Amongst the rest was faire Cymodoce,
The mother of unlucky Marinell,
Who thither with her came, to learne and see
The manner of the Gods when they at banquet be.

But for he was halfe mortall, being bred
 Of mortall sire, though of immortall wombe,
 He might not with immortall food be fed,
 Ne with th' eternall Gods to bancket come;
 But walkt abrode, and round about did rome
 To view the building of that uncouth place,
 That seem'd unlike unto his earthly home:
 Where, as he to and fro by chaunce did trace,
 There unto him betid a disaventrous case. 4

Under the hanging of an hideous clieffe
 He heard the lamentable voice of one,
 That piteously complaind her carefull grieffe,
 Which never she before disclosd to none,
 But to her selfe her sorrow did bemone:
 So feelingly her case she did complaine,
 That ruth it moved in the rocky stone,
 And made it seeme to feele her grievous paine,
 And oft to grone with billowes beating from the maine. 5

"Though vaine, I see, my sorrowes to unfold,
 And count my cares when none is nigh to heare,
 Yet hoping griefe may lessen being told,
 I will them tell though unto no man neare:
 For heaven, that unto all lends equall eare,
 Is farre from hearing of my heavy plight;
 And lowest hell, to which I lie most neare,
 Cares not what evils hap to wretched wight;
 And greedy seas doe in the spoile of life delight. 6

"Yet loe! the seas, I see, by often beating
 Doe pearce the rockes, and hardest marble weares;
 But his hard rocky hart for no entreating
 Will yeeld, but when my piteous plaints he heares,
 Is hardned more with my abundant teares:
 Yet though he never list to me relent,
 But let me waste in woe my wretched yeares,
 Yet will I never of my love repent,
 But joy that for his sake I suffer prisonment. 7

“And when my weary ghost, with grieve outworne, 8
By timely death shall winne her wished rest,
Let then this plaint unto his eares be borne,
That blame it is to him, that armes profest,
To let her die whom he might have redrest.”
There did she pause, inforced to give place
Unto the passion that her heart opprest;
And, after she had wept and wail'd a space,
She gan afresh thus to renew her wretched case :

“Ye Gods of seas, if any Gods at all 9
Have care of right, or ruth of wretches wrong,
By one or other way me, woefull thrall,
Deliver hence out of this dungeon strong,
In which I daily dying am too long :
And if ye deeme me death for loving one
That loves not me, then doe it not prolong,
But let me die and end my daies attone,
And let him live unlov'd, or love him selfe alone.

“But if that life ye unto me decree, 10
Then let mee live as lovers ought to do,
And of my lifes deare love beloved be :
And if he should through pride your doome undo,
Do you by duresse him compell thereto,
And in this prison put him here with me ;
One prison fittest is to hold us, two.
So had I rather to be thrall then free :
Such thralldome or such freedome let it surely be.

“But O! vaine judgment, and conditions vaine, 11
The which the prisoner points unto the free !
The whiles I him condemne, and deeme his paine,
He where he list goes loose, and laughes at me.
So ever loose, so ever happy be !
But whereso loose or happy that thou art,
Know, Marinell, that all this is for thee.”
With that she wept and wail'd, as if her hart
Would quite have burst through great abundance of
her smart.

All which complaint when Marinell had heard, 12
And understood the cause of all her care
To come of him for using her so hard,
His stubborne heart, that never felt misfare,
Was toucht with soft remorse and pittie rare;
That even for griefe of minde he oft did grone,
And inly wish that in his powre it weare
Her to redresse: but since he meanes found none,
He could no more but her great misery bemone.

Thus whilst his stony heart with tender ruth 13
Was toucht, and mighty courage mollifide,
Dame Venus sonne, that tameth stubborne youth
With iron bit, and maketh him abide
Till like a victor on his backe he ride,
Into his mouth his maystring bridle threw,
That made him stoupe, till he did him bestride:
Then gan he make him tread his steps anew,
And learne to love by learning lovers paines to rew.

Now gan he in his grieved minde devise, 14
How from that dungeon he might her enlarge.
Some while he thought, by faire and humble wise
To Proteus selfe to sue for her discharge;
But then he fear'd his mothers former charge
Gainst womens love, long given him in vaine:
Then gan he thinke, perforce with sword and targe
Her forth to fetch, and Proteus to constraine;
But soone he gan such folly to forthinke againe.

Then did he cast to steale her thence away, 15
And with him beare where none of her might know.
But all in vaine; for why he found no way
To enter in, or issue forth below;
For all about that rocke the sea did flow:
And though unto his will she given were,
Yet without ship or bote her thence to row,
He wist not how her thence away to bere;
And daunger well he wist long to continue there.

At last, when as no meanes he could invent, 16
Backe to him selfe he gan returne the blame,
That was the author of her punishment;
And with vile curses and reprochfull shame
To damne him selfe by every evil name,
And deeme unworthy or of love or life,
That had despise so chast and faire a dame,
Which him had sought through trouble and long
strife;

Yet had refusde a God that her had sought to wife.

In this sad plight he walked here and there, 17
And romed round about the rocke in vaine,
As he had lost him selfe he wist not where;
Oft listening if he mote her heare againe,
And still bemoaning her unworthy paine.
Like as an Hynde, whose calfe is falne unwares
Into some pit, where she him heares complaine,
An hundred times about the pit side fares,
Right sorrowfully mourning her bereaved cares.

And now by this the feast was throughly ended, 18
And every one gan homeward to resort:
Which seeing, Marinell was sore offended
That his departure thence should be so short,
And leave his love in that sea-walled fort:
Yet durst he not his mother disobay;
But her attending in full seemly sort,
Did march amongst the many all the way,
And all the way did inly mourne, like one astray.

Being returned to his mothers bowre, 19
In solitary silence, far from wight,
He gan record the lamentable stowre,
In which his wretched love lay day and night
For his deare sake, that ill deserv'd that plight:
The thought whereof empierst his hart so deepe,
That of no worldly thing he tooke delight;
Ne dayly food did take, ne nightly sleepe, [weepe.
But pyn'd, and mourn'd, and languisht, and alone did

That in short space his wonted chearefull hew 20
Gan fade, and lively spirits deaded quight :
His cheek bones raw, and eie-pits hollow grew,
And brawney armes had lost their knownen might,
That nothing like himselfe he seem'd in sight.
Ere long so weake of limbe, and sicke of love
He woxe, that lenger he note stand upright,
But to his bed was brought, and layd above,
Like ruefull ghost, unable once to stirre or move.

Which when his mother saw, she in her mind 21
Was troubled sore, ne wist well what to weene ;
Ne could by search nor any meanes out find
The secret cause and nature of his teene,
Whereby she might apply some medicine ;
But weeping day and night did him attend,
And mourn'd to see her losse before her eyne,
Which griev'd her more that she it could not mend :
To see an helplesse evill double grieve doth lend.

Nought could she read the roote of his disease, 22
Ne weene what mister maladie it is,
Whereby to seeke some meanes it to appease.
Most did she thinke, but most she thought amis,
That that same former fatall wound of his
Whyleare by Tryphon was not throughly healed,
But closely rankled under th' orifis :
Least did she thinke, that which he most concealed,
That love it was, which in his hart lay unrevealed.

Therefore to Tryphon she againe doth hast, 23
And him doth chyde as false and fraudulent,
That fayld the trust which she in him had plast,
To cure her sonne, as he his faith had lent,
Who now was falne into new languishment
Of his old hurt, which was not throughly cured.
So backe he came unto her patient ;
Where searching every part, her well assured
That it was no old sore which his new paine procured ;

But that it was some other maladie, 24
Or grief unknowne, which he could not discern :
So left he her withouten remedie.
Then gan her heart to faint, and quake, and earne,
And inly troubled was the truth to learne.
Unto himselfe she came, and him besought,
Now with faire speeches, now with threatnings sterne,
If ought lay hidden in his grieved thought,
It to reveale: who still her answered, there was nought.

Nathlesse she rested not so satisfide; 25
But leaving watry gods, as booting nought,
Unto the shinie heaven in haste she hide,
And thence Apollo, King of Leaches, brought.
Apollo came; who, soone as he had sought
Through his disease, did by and by out find
That he did languish of some inward thought,
The which afflicted his engrieved mind;
Which love he red to be, that leads each living kind.

Which when he had unto his mother told, 26
She gan thereat to fret and greatly grieve;
And, comming to her sonne, gan first to scold
And chyde at him that made her misbelieve:
But afterwards she gan him soft to shrieve,
And wooe with fair intreatie, to disclose
Which of the Nymphes his heart so sore did mieve;
For sure she weend it was some one of those,
Which he had lately seene, that for his love he chose.

Now lesse she feared that same fatall read, 27
That warned him of womens love beware,
Which being ment of mortall creatures sead,
For love of Nymphes she thought she need not care,
But promist him, what ever wight she weare,
That she her love to him would shortly gaine.
So he her told; but soone as she did heare
That Florimell it was which wrought his paine,
She gan afresh to chafe, and grieve in every vaine.

Yet since she saw the streight extremitie, 28
 In which his life unluckily was layd,
 It was no time to scan the prophecie,
 Whether old Proteus true or false had sayd,
 That his decay should happen by a mayd :
 It's late in death of daunger to advize,
 Or love forbid him, that is life denayd ;
 But rather gan in troubled mind devise
 How she that Ladies libertie might enterprize.

To Proteus selfe to sew she thought it vaine, 29
 Who was the root and worker of her woe,
 Nor unto any meaner to complaine ;
 But unto great king Neptune selfe did goe,
 And on her knee before him falling lowe,
 Made humble suit unto his Majestie
 To graunt to her her sonnes life, which his foe,
 A cruell Tyrant, had presumptuouslie
 By wicked doome condemn'd a wretched death to die.

To whom God Neptune, softly smyling, thus : 30
 " Daughter, me seemes of double wrong ye plaine,
 Gainst one that hath both wronged you and us ;
 For death t' adward I ween'd did appertaine
 To none but to the seas sole Soveraine.
 Read therefore who it is which this hath wrought,
 And for what cause : the truth discover plaine,
 For never wight so evill did or thought, [nought."
 But would some rightfull cause pretend, though rightly

To whom she answer'd : " Then, it is by name 31
 Proteus, that hath ordayn'd my sonne to die ;
 For that a waift, the which by fortune came
 Upon your seas, he claym'd as propertie :
 And yet nor his, nor his in equitie,
 But yours the waift by high prerogative.
 Therefore I humbly crave your Majestie
 It to replevie, and my sonne reprive.
 So shall you by one gift save all us three alive."

He graunted it; and streight his warrant made, 32
Under the Sea-god's seale autenticall,
Commaunding Proteus straight t' enlarge the mayd,
Which wandring on his seas imperiall
He lately tooke, and sithence kept as thrall.
Which she receiving with meete thankefulnesse,
Departed straight to Proteus therewithall;
Who, reading it with inward loathfulnesse,
Was grieved to restore the pledge he did possesse.

Yet durst he not the warrant to withstand, 33
But unto her delivered Florimell:
Whom she receiving by the lilly hand,
Admyr'd her beautie much, as she mote well,
For she all living creatures did excell;
And was right joyous that she gotten had
So faire a wife for her sonne Marinell.
So home with her she streight the virgin lad,
And shewed her to him, then being sore bestad.

Who soone as he beheld that angels face 34
Adorn'd with all divine perfection,
His cheared heart eftsoones away gan chace
Sad death, revived with her sweet inspection,
And feeble spirit inly felt refection:
As withered weed through cruell winters tine,
That feeles the warmth of sunny beames reflection,
Liftes up his head that did before decline,
And gins to spread his leafe before the faire sunshine.

Right so himselfe did Marinell upreare, 35
When he in place his dearest love did spy;
And though his limbs could not his bodie beare,
Ne former strength returne so suddenly,
Yet chearefull signes he shewed outwardly.
Ne lesse was she in secret hart affected,
But that she masked it with modestie,
For feare she should of lightnesse be detected:
Which to another place I leave to be perfected.



THE FIFTH BOOKE OF
THE FAERIE QUEENE.

CONTAYNING THE LEGEND OF ARTEGALL OR OF
JUSTICE.

SO oft as I with state of present time 1
The image of the antique world compare,
When as mans age was in his freshest
prime,

And the first blossome of faire vertue bare ;
Such oddes I finde twixt those, and these which are,
As that, through long continuance of his course,
Me seemes the world is runne quite out of square
From the first point of his appointed sourse ;
And being once amisse growes daily wourse and wourse :

For from the golden age, that first was named, 2
It's now at earst become a stonie one ;
And men themselves, the which at first were framed
Of earthly mould, and form'd of flesh and bone,
Are now transformed into hardest stone ;
Such as behind their backs (so backward bred)
Were throwne by Pyrrha and Deucalione :
And if then those may any worse be red,
They into that ere long will be degendered.

Let none then blame me, if in discipline 3
Of vertue and of civill uses lore,
I doe not forme them to the common line
Of present dayes, which are corrupted sore,
But to the antique use which was of yore,
When good was onely for it selfe desyred,
And all men sought their owne, and none no more;
When Justice was not for most meed outhyred,
But simple Truth did rayne, and was of all admyred.

For that which all men then did vertue call, 4
Is now cald vice; and that which vice was hight,
Is now hight vertue, and so us'd of all:
Right now is wrong, and wrong that was is right;
As all things else in time are chaunged quight:
Ne wonder; for the heavens revolution
Is wandred farre from where it first was pight,
And so doe make contrarie constitution
Of all this lower world, toward his dissolution.

For who so list into the heavens looke, 5
And search the courses of the rowling spheares,
Shall find that from the point where they first tooke
Their setting forth, in these few thousand yeares
They all are wandred much; that plaine appears:
For that same golden fleecy Ram, which bore
Phrixus and Helle from their stepdames feares,
Hath now forgot where he was plast of yore,
And shouldred hath the Bull which fayre Europa bore:

And eke the Bull hath with his bow-bent horne 6
So hardly butted those two twinnes of Jove,
That they have crusht the Crab, and quite him borne
Into the great Nemæan lions grove.
So now all range, and doe at randon rove
Out of their proper places farre away,
And all this world with them amisse doe move,
And all his creatures from their course astray,
Till they arrive at their last ruinous decay.

Ne is that same great glorious lampe of light, 7
That doth enlumine all these lesser fyres,
In better case, ne keepes his course more right,
But is miscaried with the other Spheres :
For since the terme of fourteene hundred yeres,
That learned Ptolomæe his hight did take,
He is declyned from that marke of theirs
Nigh thirtie minutes to the Southerne lake ;
That makes me feare in time he will us quite forsake.

And if to those Ægyptian wisards old, 8
Which in Star-read were wont have best insight,
Faith may be given, it is by them told
That since the time they first tooke the Sunnes hight,
Foure times his place he shifted hath in sight,
And twice hath risen where he now doth West,
And wested twice where he ought rise aright :
But most is Mars amisse of all the rest,
And next to him old Saturne, that was wont be best.

For during Saturnes ancient raigne it's sayd 9
That all the world with goodnesse did abound ;
All loved vertue, no man was affrayd
Of force, ne fraud in wight was to be found ;
No warre was knowne, no dreadfull trompets sound ;
Peace universall rayn'd mongst men and beasts,
And all things freely grew out of the ground :
Justice sate high ador'd with solemne feasts,
And to all people did divide her dred beheasts :

Most sacred vertue she of all the rest, 10
Resembling God in his imperiall might ;
Whose soveraine powre is herein most exprest,
That both to good and bad he dealeth right,
And all his workes with Justice hath bedight.
That powre he also doth to Princes lend,
And makes them like himselfe in glorious sight
To sit in his own seate, his cause to end,
And rule his people right, as he doth recommend.

Dread Soverayne Goddesses, that doest highest sit 11
In seate of judgement in th' Almightyes stead,
And with magnificke might and wondrous wit
Doest to thy people righteous doome aread,
That furthest Nations filles with awfull dread,
Pardon the boldnesse of thy basest thrall,
That dare discourse of so divine a read
As thy great justice, praysed over all;
The instrument whereof loe! here thy Artegall.



CANTO I.

*Artégall trayn'd in Justice lore
Irenæes quest pursuwed;
He doth avenge on Sanglier
his Ladies bloud embrewed.*

THOUGH vertue then were held in highest
price,
In those old times of which I doe entreat,
Yet then likewise the wicked seede of vice
Began to spring; which shortly grew full great,
And with their boughes the gentle plants did beat:
But evermore some of the vertuous race
Rose up, inspired with heroicke heat,
That crompt the branches of the sient base, [deface.
And with strong hand their fruitfull rancknes did
Such first was Bacchus, that with furious might 2
All th' East, before untam'd, did over ronne,
And wrong repressed, and establisht right,
Which lawlesse men had formerly fordonne:
There Justice first her princely rule begonnew.
Next Hercules his like ensample shewed,
Who all the West with equall conquest wonne,
And monstrous tyrants with his club subdued:
The club of Justice dread with kingly powre endewed.
And such was he of whom I have to tell, 3
The Champion of true Justice, Artégall:
Whom (as ye lately mote remember well)
An hard adventure, which did then befall,
Into redoubted perill forth did call;
That was, to succour a distressed Dame
Whom a strong tyrant did unjustly thrall,
And from the heritage, which she did clame,
Did with strong hand withhold; Grantorto was his
name.

Wherefore the Lady, which Irena hight, 4
Did to the Faery Queene her way addresse,
To whom complayning her afflicted plight,
She her besought of gracious redresse.
That soveraine Queene, that mightie Emperesse,
Whose glorie is to aide all suppliants pore,
And of weake Princes to be Patronesse,
Chose Artegall to right her to restore;
For that to her he seem'd best skild in righteous lore.

For Artegall in justice was upbrought 5
Even from the cradle of his infancie,
And all the depth of rightfull doome was taught
By faire Astræa with great industrie,
Whilest here on earth she lived mortallie:
For till the world from his perfection fell
Into all filth and foule iniquitie,
Astræa here mongst earthly men did dwell,
And in the rules of justice them instructed well

Whiles through the world she walked in this sort, 6
Upon a day she found this gentle childe
Amongst his peres playing his childish sport;
Whom seeing fit, and with no crime defilde,
She did allure with gifts and speaches milde
To wend with her. So thence him farre she brought
Into a cave from companie exile,
In which she noursled him till yeares he raught;
And all the discipline of justice there him taught.

There she him taught to weigh both right and wrong 7
In equall ballance with due recompence,
And equitie to measure out along
According to the line of conscience,
When so it needs with rigour to dispence:
Of all the which, for want there of mankind,
She caused him to make experience
Upon wyld beasts, which she in woods did find
With wrongfull powre oppressing others of their kind.

Thus she him trayned, and thus she him taught 8
In all the skill of deeming wrong and right,
Untill the ripenesse of mans years he raught;
That even wilde beasts did feare his awfull sight,
And men admyr'd his overruling might:
Ne any liv'd on ground that durst withstand
His dreadfull heast, much lesse him match in fight,
Or bide the horror of his wreakfull hand,
When so he list in wrath lift up his steely brand.

Which steely brand, to make him dreaded more, 9
She gave unto him, gotten by her slight
And earnest search, where it was kept in store
In Joves eternall house, unwist of wight,
Since he himselfe it us'd in that great fight
Against the Titans, that whylome rebelled
Gainst highest heaven: Chrysaor it was hight;
Chrysaor, that all other swords excelled, [quelled:
Well prov'd in that same day when Jove those Gyants

For of most perfect metall it was made, 10
Tempred with Adamant amongst the same,
And garnisht all with gold upon the blade
In goodly wise, whereof it took his name,
And was of no lesse vertue then of fame;
For there no substance was so firme and hard,
But it would pierce or cleave, whereso it came,
Ne any armour could his dint outward;
But wheresoever it did light, it throughly shard.

Now, when the world with sinne gan to abound, 11
Astræa loathing lenger here to space
Mongst wicked men, in whom no truth she found,
Return'd to heaven, whence she deriv'd her race;
Where she hath now an everlasting place
Mongst those twelve signes, which nightly we do see
The heavens bright-shining baudricke to enchace;
And is the Virgin, sixt in her degree,
And next her selfe her righteous ballance hanging bee.

But when she parted hence she left her groome, 12
An yron man, which did on her attend
Alwayes to execute her stedfast doome,
And willed him with Artegall to wend,
And doe what ever thing he did intend :
His name was Talus, made of yron mould,
Immoveable, resistlesse, without end ;
Who in his hand an yron flae did hould, [fould.
With which he thresht out falshood, and did truth un-

He now went with him in this new inquest, 13
Him for to aide, if aide he chaunst to neede,
Against that cruell Tyrant, which opprest
The faire Irena with his foule misdeede,
And kept the crowne in which she should succeed :
And now together on their way they bin,
When as they saw a Squire in squallid weed
Lamenting sore his sorrowfull sad tyne,
With many bitter teares shed from his blubbred eyne.

To whom as they approached, they espide 14
A sorie sight as ever seene with eye,
An headlesse Ladie lying him beside
In her owne blood all wallow'd wofully,
That her gay clothes did in discolour die.
Much was he moved at that ruefull sight ;
And flam'd with zeale of vengeance inwardly,
He askt who had that Dame so foully dight,
Or whether his owne hand, or whether other wight ?

" Ah ! woe is me, and well away," (quoth hee, 15
Bursting forth teares like springs out of a banke),
" That ever I this dismall day did see !
Full farre was I from thinking such a pranke ;
Yet litle losse it were, and mickle thanke,
If I should graunt that I have doen the same,
That I mote drinke the cup whereof she dranke,
But that I should die guiltie of the blame
The which another did, who now is fled with shame."

"Who was it then," (sayd Artegall) "that wrought?
And why? doe it declare unto me trew."

"A knight," (said he) "if knight he may be thought
That did his hand in Ladies bloud embrew,
And for no cause, but as I shall you shew.
This day as I in solace sate hereby
With a fayre love, whose losse I now do rew,
There came this knight, having in companie
This lucklesse Ladie which now here doth headlesse lie.

"He, whether mine seem'd fayrer in his eye, 17
Or that he wexed weary of his owne,
Would change with me, but I did it denye;
So did the Ladies both, as may be knowne:
But he, whose spirit was with pride upblowne,
Would not so rest contented with his right;
But, having from his courser her downe throwne,
Fro me reft mine away by lawlesse might,
And on his steed her set to beare her out of sight.

"Which when his Ladie saw, she follow'd fast, 18
And on him catching hold gan loud to crie
Not so to leave her, nor away to cast,
But rather of his hand besought to die.
With that his sword he drew all wrathfully,
And at one stroke cropt off her head with scorne,
In that same place whereas it now doth lie.
So he my love away with him hath borne,
And left me here both his and mine own love to morne."

"Aread" (sayd he) "which way then did he make? 19
And by what markes may he be knowne againe?"
"To hope" (quoth he) "him soone to overtake,
That hence so long departed, is but vaine;
But yet he pricked over yonder plaine,
And as I marked bore upon his shield,
By which it's easie him to know againe,
A broken sword within a bloodie field;
Expressing well his nature which the same did wield."

No sooner sayd, but streight he after sent 20
His yron page, who him pursew'd so light,
As that it seem'd above the ground he went;
For he was swift as swallow in her flight,
And strong as Lyon in his lordly might.
It was not long before he overtooke
Sir Sanglier, (so cleeped was that Knight)
Whom at the first he ghessed by his looke,
And by the other markes which of his shield he tooke.

He bad him stay, and backe with him retire; 21
Who, full of scorne to be commaunded so,
The Lady to alight did eft require,
Whilest he reformed that uncivill fo,
And streight at him with all his force did go;
Who mov'd no more therewith, then when a rocke
Is lightly stricken with some stones throw;
But to him leaping lent him such a knocke,
That on the ground he layd him like a sencelesse blocke.

But, ere he could him selfe recure againe, 22
Him in his iron paw he seized had;
That when he wak't out of his warelesse paine,
He found him selfe unwist so ill bestad,
That lim he could not wag. Thence he him lad,
Bound like a beast appointed to the stall:
The sight whereof the Lady sore adrad,
And fain'd to fly for feare of being thrall;
But he her quickly stayd, and forst to wend withall.

When to the place they came, where Artegall 23
By that same carefull Squire did then abide,
He gently gan him to demaund of all
That did betwixt him and that Squire betide:
Who with sterne countenance and indignant pride
Did aunswere, that of all he guiltlesse stood,
And his accuser thereuppon defide;
For neither he did shed that Ladies bloud,
Nor tooke away his love, but his owne proper good.

Well did the Squire perceive him selfe too weake 24
To aunswere his defiaunce in the field,
And rather chose his challenge off to breake,
Then to approve his right with speare and shield,
And rather guilty chose himselfe to yield :
But Artegall by signes perceiving plaine
That he it was not which that Lady kild,
But that strange Knight, the fairer love to gaine,
Did cast about by sleight the truth thereout to straine;

And sayd; "Now sure this doubtfull causes right 25
Can hardly but by Sacrament be tride,
Or else by ordele, or by blooddy fight,
That ill perhaps mote fall to either side ;
But if ye please that I your cause decide,
Perhaps I may all further quarrell end,
So ye will sweare my judgement to abide."
Thereto they both did franckly condescend,
And to his doome with listfull eares did both attend.

"Sith then," (sayd he) "ye both the dead deny, 26
And both the living Lady claime your right,
Let both the dead and living equally
Devided be betwixt you here in sight,
And each of either take his share aright :
But looke, who does dissent from this my read,
He for a twelve moneths day shall in despight
Beare for his penance that same Ladies head,
To witnesse to the world that she by him is dead."

Well pleased with that doome was Sangliere, 27
And offred streight the Lady to be slaine ;
But that same Squire, to whom she was more dere,
When as he saw she should be cut in twaine,
Did yield she rather should with him remaine
Alive, then to him selfe be shared dead ;
And rather then his Love should suffer paine,
He chose with shame to beare that Ladies head.
True love despiseth shame, when life is cald in dread.

Whom when so willing Artegall perceaved ; 28
"Not so, thou Squire," (he sayd) "but thine I deeme
The living Lady, which from thee he reaved ;
For worthy thou of her doest rightly seeme.
And you, Sir Knight, that love so light esteeme,
As that ye would for little leave the same,
Take here your owne, that doth you best beseeme,
And with it beare the burden of defame,
Your owne dead Ladies head, to tell abroad your shame."

But Sangliere disdained much his doome, 29
And sternly gan repine at his beheast ;
Ne would for ought obay, as did become,
To beare that Ladies head before his breast.
Until that Talus had his pride represt,
And forced him, maulgre, it up to reare.
Who when he saw it bootelesse to resist,
He tooke it up, and thence with him did beare,
As rated Spaniell takes his burden up for feare.

Much did that Squire Sir Artegall adore 30
For his great justice, held in high regard,
And as his Squire him offred evermore
To serve, for want of other meete reward,
And wend with him on his adventure hard ;
But he thereto would by no meanes consent,
But leaving him forth on his journey far'd :
Ne wight with him but onely Talus went ;
They two enough t' encounter an whole Regiment.

CANTO II.

*Artegall heares of Florimell;
Does with the Pagan fight:
Him slaies; drownes Lady Munera;
Does race her castle quight.*

NOUGH¹ is more honourable to a knight,
Ne better doth beseeme brave chevalry,
Then to defend the feeble in their right,
And wrong redresse in such as wend awry:
Whilome those great Heroes got thereby
Their greatest glory for their rightfull deedes,
And place deserved with the Gods on hy.
Herein the noblesse of this knight exceedes,
Who now to perils great for justice sake proceedes.

To which as he now was uppon the way,²
He chaunst to meet a Dwarfe in hasty course,
Whom he requir'd his forward hast to stay,
Till he of tidings mote with him discourse.
Loth was the Dwarfe, yet did he stay perforce,
And gan of sundry newes his store to tell,
As to his memory they had recourse;
But chiefly of the fairest Florimell,
How she was found againe, and spousesde to Marineli.

For this was Dony, Florimels owne Dwarfe,³
Whom having lost, (as ye have heard whyleare)
And finding in the way the scattred scarfe,
The fortune of her life long time did feare:
But of her health when Artegall did heare,
And safe returne, he was full inly glad,
And askt him where and when her bridale cheare.
Should be solemniz'd; for, if time he had,
He would be there, and honor to her spousall ad.

“Within three daies,” (quoth he) “as I do here, 4
It will be at the Castle of the strond;
What time, if naught me let, I will be there
To do her service so as I am bond:
But in my way, a little here beyond,
A cursed cruell Sarazin doth wonne,
That keepes a Bridges passage by strong hond,
And many errant Knights hath there fordonne;
That makes all men for feare that passage for to shonne.”

“What mister wight,” (quoth he) “and how far hence
Is he, that doth to travellers such harmes?”
“He is” (said he) “a man of great defence,
Expert in battell and in deedes of armes;
And more emboldned by the wicked charmes,
With which his daughter doth him still support;
Having great Lordships got and goodly farmes,
Through strong oppression of his powre extort;
By which he stil them holds, and keepes with strong
effort.

“And dayly he his wrongs increaseth more; 6
For never wight he lets to passe that way
Over his Bridge, albee he rich or poore,
But he him makes his passage-penny pay:
Else he doth hold him backe or beat away.
Thereto he hath a groome of evill guize,
Whose scalp is bare, that bondage doth bewray,
Which pils and pils the poore in piteous wize;
But he him selfe uppon the rich doth tyrannize.

“His name is hight Pollente, rightly so, 7
For that he is so puissant and strong,
That with his powre he all doth overgo,
And makes them subject to his mighty wrong;
And some by sleight he eke doth underfong:
For on a Bridge he custometh to fight,
Which is but narrow, but exceeding long;
And in the same are many trap fals pight, [sight.
Through which the rider downe doth fall through over-

“ And underneath the same a river flowes 8
That is both swift and dangerous deepe withall ;
Into the which whom so he overthrowes,
All destitute of helpe doth headlong fall ;
But he him selfe through practise usuall
Leapes forth into the flood, and there assaies
His foe confused through his sodaine fall,
That horse and man he equally dismaies,
And either both them drownes, or trayterously slaies.

“ Then doth he take the spoile of them at will, 9
And to his daughter brings, that dwels thereby ;
Who all that comes doth take, and therewith fill
The coffers of her wicked threasury,
Which she with wrongs hath heaped up so hy
That many Princes she in wealth exceedes,
And purchast all the countrey lying ny
With the revenue of her plenteous meedes :
Her name is Munera, agreeing with her deedes.

“ Thereto she is full faire, and rich attired, 10
With golden hands and silver feete beside,
That many Lords have her to wife desired,
But she them all despiseth for great pride.”
“ Now by my life,” (sayd he) “ and God to guide,
None other way will I this day betake,
But by that Bridge whereas he doth abide :
Therefore me thither lead.” No more he spake,
But thitherward forthright his ready way did make.

Unto the place he came within a while, 11
Where on the Bridge he ready armed saw
The Sarazin, awayting for some spoile :
Who as they to the passage gan to draw,
A villaine to them came with scull all raw,
That passage money did of them require,
According to the custome of their law :
To whom he aunswerd wroth, “ Loe! therethy hire ;”
And with that word him strooke, that streight he did
expire.

Which when the Pagan saw he wexed wroth, 12
And streight him selfe unto the fight address :
Ne was Sir Artegall behinde ; so both
Together ran with ready speares in rest.
Right in the midst, whereas they brest to brest
Should meete, a trap was letten downe to fall
Into the flood : streight leapt the Carle unblest,
Well weening that his foe was falne withall ;
But he was well aware, and leapt before his fall.

There being both together in the flood, 13
They each at other tyrannously flew ;
Ne ought the water cooled their whot blood,
But rather in them kindled choler new :
But there the Paynim, who that use well knew
To fight in water, great advantage had,
That oftentimes him nigh he overthrew :
And eke the courser whereuppon he rad
Could swim like to a fish, whiles he his backe bestrad.

Which oddes when as Sir Artegall espide, 14
He saw no way but close with him in hast ;
And to him driving strongly downe the tide
Uppon his iron collar griped fast,
That with the straint his wesand nigh he brast.
There they together strove and struggled long
Either the other from his steed to cast ;
Ne ever Artegall his griple strong
For any thing wold slacke, but still upon him hong.

As when a Dolphin and a Sele are met 15
In the wide champion of the Ocean plaine,
With cruell chaufe their courages they whet,
The maysterdome of each by force to gaine,
And dreadfull battaile twixt them do darraine .
They snuf, they snort, they bounce, they rage, they
 rore,
That all the sea, disturbed with their traine,
Doth frie with fome above the surges hore.
Such was betwixt these two the troublesome uprore.

So Artegall at length him forst forsake 16
His horses backe for dread of being drownd,
And to his handy swimming him betake.
Eftsoones him selfe he from his hold unbownd,
And then no ods at all in him he fownd;
For Artegall in swimming skilfull was,
And durst the depth of any water sownd.
So ought each Knight, that use of perill has,
In swimming be expert, through waters force to pas.

Then very doubtfull was the warres event, 17
Uncertaine whether had the better side;
For both were skild in that experiment,
And both in armes well traind, and throughly tride:
But Artegall was better breath'd beside,
And towards th' end grew greater in his might,
That his faint foe no longer could abide
His puissance, ne beare him selfe upright;
But from the water to the land betooke his flight.

But Artegall pursewd him still so neare 18
With bright Chrysaor in his cruell hand,
That as his head he gan a litle reare
Above the brincke to tread upon the land,
He smote it off, that tumbling on the strand
It bit the earth for very fell despight,
And gnashed with his teeth, as if he band
High God, whose goodnesse he despaired quight,
Or curst the hand which did that vengeance on him
dight.

His corps was carried downe along the Lee, 19
Whose waters with his filthy bloud it stayned;
But his blasphemous head, that all might see,
He pitcht upon a pole on high ordayned;
Where many years it afterwards remayned,
To be a mirrour to all mighty men,
In whose right hands great power is containd,
That none of them the feeble overren,
But alwaies doe their powre within just compasse pen.

That done, unto the Castle he did wend, 20
In which the Paynims daughter did abide,
Guarded of many which did her defend :
Of whom he entrance sought, but was denide,
And with reprochfull blasphemy defide ;
Beaten with stones downe from the battilment,
That he was forced to withdraw aside,
And bad his servant Talus to invent
Which way he enter might without endangerment.

Eftsoones his Page drew to the Castle gate, 21
And with his iron flae at it let flie,
That all the warders it did sore amate,
The which erewhile spake so reprochfully,
And made them stoupe that looked earst so hie.
Yet still he bet and bounst uppon the dore,
And thundred strokes thereon so hideouslie,
That all the peece he shook from the flore,
And filled all the house with feare and great uprore.

With noise whereof the Lady forth appeared 22
Uppon the Castle wall ; and, when she saw
The daungerous state in which she stood, she feared
The sad effect of her neare overthrow ;
And gan entreat that iron man below
To cease his outrage, and him faire besought ;
Sith neither force of stones which they did throw,
Nor powr of charms, which she against him wrought,
Might otherwise prevaile, or make him cease for ought.

But, when as yet she saw him to proceede 23
Unmov'd with praiera or with piteous thought,
She ment him to corrupt with goodly meede ;
And causde great sakes with endlesse riches fraught
Unto the battilment to be upbrought,
And powred forth over the Castle wall,
That she might win some time, though dearly bought,
Whilest he to gathering of the gold did fall :
But he was nothing mov'd nor tempted therewithall :

But still continu'd his assault the more, 24
And layd on load with his huge yron flaile,
That at the length he has yrent the dore,
And made way for his maister to assaile;
Who being entred, nought did then availe
For wight against his powre them selves to reare.
Each one did flie; their hearts began to faile,
And hid them selves in corners here and there;
And eke their dame halfe dead did hide her self for feare.

Long they her sought, yet no where could they finde her,
That sure they ween'd she was escapt away;
But Talus, that could like a limehound winde her,
And all things secrete wisely could bewray,
At length found out whereas she hidden lay
Under an heape of gold. Thence he her drew
By the faire lockes, and fowly did array
Withouten pittie of her goodly hew,
That Artegall him selfe her seemelesse plight did rew.

Yet for no pittie would he change the course 26
Of Justice, which in Talus hand did lye;
Who rudely hayld her forth without remorse,
Still holding up her suppliant hands on hye,
And kneeling at his feete submissively:
But he her suppliant hands, those hands of gold,
And eke her feete, those feete of silver trye,
Which sought unrighteousnesse, and justice sold,
Chopt off, and nayld on high that all might them behold.

Her selfe then tooke he by the slender wast, 27
In vaine loud crying, and into the flood
Over the Castle wall adowne her cast,
And there her drowned in the durty mud;
But the streame washt away her guilty blood.
Thereafter all that mucky pelfe he tooke,
The spoile of peoples evil gotten good,
The which her sire had scrap't by hooke and crooke,
And burning all to ashes powr'd it down the brooke.

And lastly all that Castle quite he raced, 28
Even from the sole of his foundation,
And all the hewen stones thereof defaced,
That there mote be no hope of reparation,
Nor memory thereof to any nation.
All which when Talus throughly had perfourmed,
Sir Artegall undid the evill fashion,
And wicked customes of that Bridge refourmed :
Which done, unto his former journey he retourned.

In which they measur'd mickle weary way, 29
Till that at length nigh to the sea they drew ;
By which as they did travell on a day,
They saw before them, far as they could vew,
Full many people gathered in a crew :
Whose great assembly they did much admire,
For never there the like resort they knew.
So towards them they coasted, to enquire
What thing so many nations met did there desire.

There they beheld a mighty Gyant stand 30
Upon a rocke, and holding forth on hie
An huge great paire of ballance in his hand,
With which he boasted, in his surquedrie,
That all the world he would weigh equallie,
If ought he had the same to counterpoys :
For want whereof he weighed vanity,
And fild his ballaunce full of idle toys :
Yet was admired much of fooles, women, and boys.

He sayd that he would all the earth uptake 31
And all the sea, divided each from either :
So would he of the fire one ballaunce make,
And one of th' ayre, without or wind or wether
Then would he ballaunce heaven and hell together,
And all that did within them all containe,
Of all whose weight he would not misse a fether :
And looke what surplus did of each remaine,
He would to his owne part restore the same againe.

For why, he sayd, they all unequall were, 32
And had encroached upon others share;
Like as the sea (which plaine he shewed there)
Had worne the earth; so did the fire the aire;
So all the rest did others parts empaire,
And so were realmes and nations run awry.
All which he undertooke for to repaire,
In sort as they were formed aunciently;
And all things would reduce unto equality.

Therefore the vulgar did about him flocke, 33
And cluster thicke unto his leasings vaine,
Like foolish flies about an hony crocke;
In hope by him great benefite to gaine,
And uncontrolled freedome to obtaine.
All which when Artegall did see and heare,
How he mis-led the simple peoples traine,
In sdeignfull wize he drew unto him neare,
And thus unto him spake, without regard or feare.

"Thou that presum'st to weigh the world anew, 34
And all things to an equall to restore,
In stead of right me seemes great wrong dost shew,
And far above thy forces pitch to sore;
For ere thou limit what is lesse or more
In every thing, thou oughtest first to know
What was the poyse of every part of yore:
And looke then how much it doth overflow
Or faile thereof, so much is more then just to trow.

"For at the first they all created were 35
In goodly measure by their Makers might;
And weighed out in ballaunces so nere,
That not a dram was missing of their right:
The earth was in the middle centre pight,
In which it doth immoveable abide,
Hemd in with waters like a wall in sight,
And they with aire, that not a drop can slide:
Al which the heavens containe, and in their courses
guide.

"Such heavenly justice doth among them raine, 36
That every one doe know their certaine bound ;
In which they doe these many yeares remaine,
And mongst them al no change hath yet beene found ;
But if thou now shouldst weigh them new in pound,
We are not sure they would so long remaine :
All change is perillous, and all chaunce unsound.
Therefore leave off to weigh them all againe,
Till we may be assur'd they shall their course retaine."

"Thou foolishe Elfe," (said then the Gyant wroth) 37
"Seest not how badly all things present bee,
And each estate quite out of order goth ?
The sea it selfe doest thou not plainely see
Encroch uppon the land there under thee ?
And th' earth it selfe how daily its increast
By all that dying to it turned be :
Were it not good that wrong were then surceast,
And from the most that some were given to the least ?

"Therefore I will throw downe these mountaines hie,
And make them levell with the lowly plaine ;
These towring rocks, which reach unto the skie,
I will thrust downe into the deepest maine,
And, as they were, them equalize againe.
Tyrants, that make men subject to their law,
I will suppress, that they no more may raine ;
And Lordings curbe that commons over-aw ;
And all the wealth of rich men to the poore will draw."

"Of things unseene how canst thou deeme aright," 39
Then answered the righteous Artégall,
"Sith thou misdeem'st so much of things in sight ?
What though the sea with waves continuall
Doe eate the earth, it is no more at all ;
Ne is the earth the lesse, or loseth ought,
For whatsoever from one place doth fall
Is with the tide unto an other brought :
For there is nothing lost, that may be found if sought."

"Likewise the earth is not augmented more 40
By all that dying into it doe fade ;
For of the earth they formed were of yore :
How ever gay their blossome or their blade
Doe flourish now, they into dust shall vade.
What wrong then is it, if that when they die
They turne to that whereof they first were made ?
All in the powre of their great Maker lie :
All creatures must obey the voice of the most hie.

"They live, they die, like as he doth ordaine, 41
Ne ever any asketh reason why.
The hils doe not the lowly dales disdaine,
The dales doe not the lofty hils envy.
He maketh Kings to sit in sovereignty ;
He maketh subjects to their powre obay ;
He pulleth downe, he setteth up on hy ;
He gives to this, from that he takes away,
For all we have is his : what he list doe, he may.

"What ever thing is done by him is donne, 42
Ne any may his mighty will withstand ;
Ne any may his souveraine power shonne,
Ne loose that he hath bound with stedfast band.
In vain therefore doest thou now take in hand
To call to count, or weigh his workes anew,
Whose counsels depth thou canst not understand ;
Sith of things subject to thy daily vew
Thou doest not know the causes, nor their courses dew.

"For take thy ballaunce, if thou be so wise, 43
And weigh the winde that under heaven doth blow ;
Or weigh the light that in the East doth rise ;
Or weigh the thought that from mans mind doth flow :
But if the weight of these thou canst not show,
Weigh but one word which from thy lips doth fall :
For how canst thou those greater secrets know,
That doest not know the least thing of them all ?
Ill can he rule the great that cannot reach the small."

Therewith the Gyant much abashed sayd, . 44
That he of little things made reckoning light ;
Yet the least word that ever could be layd
Within his ballaunce he could way aright.
"Which is" (sayd he) "more heavy then in weight,
The right or wrong, the false or else the trew ?"
He answered that he would try it streight ;
So he the words into his ballaunce threw,
But streight the winged words out of his ballaunce flew.

Wroth wext he then, and sayd that words were light,
Ne would within his ballaunce well abide :
But he could justly weigh the wrong or right.
"Well then," sayd Artegall, "let it be tride :
First in one ballance set the true aside."
He did so first, and then the false he layd
In th' other scale ; but still it downe did slide,
And by no meane could in the weight be stayd ;
For by no meanes the false will with the truth be wayd.

"Now take the right likewise," sayd Artegale, 46
"And counterpeise the same with so much wrong."
So first the right he put into one scale,
And then the Gyant strove with puissance strong
To fill the other scale with so much wrong ;
But all the wrongs that he therein could lay
Might not it peise ; yet did he labour long,
And swat, and chauf'd, and proved every way :
Yet all the wrongs could not a litle right downe way.

Which when he saw he greatly grew in rage, 47
And almost would his balances have broken ;
But Artegall him fairely gan asswage,
And said, "Be not upon thy balance wroken,
For they do nought but right or wrong betoken ;
But in the mind the doome of right must bee :
And so likewise of words, the which be spoken,
The eare must be the ballance, to decree
And judge, whether with truth or falshood they agree.

“ But set the truth and set the right aside, 48
For they with wrong or falshood will not fare,
And put two wrongs together to be tride,
Or else two falses, of each equall share,
And then together doe them both compare;
For truth is one, and right is ever one.”
So did he; and then plaine it did appeare,
Whether of them the greater were attone;
But right sat in the midst of the beame alone.

But he the right from thence did thrust away, 49
For it was not the right which he did seeke,
But rather strove extremities to way,
Th’ one to diminish, th’ other for to eeke;
For of the meane he greatly did misleeke.
Whom when so lewdly minded Talus found,
Approching nigh unto him; cheeke by cheeke,
He shouldered him from off the higher ground,
And down the rock him throwing in the sea him dround.

Like as a ship, whom cruell tempest drives 50
Upon a rocke with horrible dismay,
Her shattered ribs in thousand peeces rives,
And spoyling all her geares and goodly ray
Does make her selfe misfortunes piteous pray.
So downe the cliffe the wretched Gyant tumbled;
His battred ballances in peeces lay,
His timpered bones all broken rudely rumbled:
So was the high aspyring with huge ruine humbled.

That when the people, which had there about 51
Long wayted, saw his sudden desolation,
They gan to gather in tumultuous rout,
And mutining to stirre up civill faction
For certaine losse of so great expectation:
For well they hoped to have got great good,
And wondrous riches by his innovation.
Therefore resolving to revenge his blood
They rose in armes, and all in battell order stood.

Which lawlesse multitude him comming too 52
In warlike wise when Artegall did vew,
He much was troubled, ne wist what to doo :
For loth he was his noble hands t' embrew
In the base blood of such a rascall crew ;
And otherwise, if that he should retire,
He fear'd least they with shame would him pursew :
Therefore he Talus to them sent t' inquire
The cause of their array, and truce for to desire.

But soone as they him nigh approching spide, 53
They gan with all their weapons him assay,
And rudely stroke at him on every side ;
Yet nought they could him hurt, ne ought dismay :
But when at them he with his flaile gan lay,
He like a swarme of flyes them overthrew ;
Ne any of them durst come in his way,
But here and there before his presence flew,
And hid themselves in holes and bushes from his vew.

As when a Faulcon hath with nimble flight 54
Flowne at a flush of Ducks foreby the brooke,
The trembling foule dismayd with dreadfull sight
Of death, the which them almost overtooke,
Doe hide themselves from her astonying looke
Amongst the flags and covert round about.
When Talus saw they all the field forsooke,
And none appear'd of all that raskall rout,
To Artegall he turn'd and went with him throughout.

CANTO III.

*The spousals of faire Florimell,
where turney many knights:
There Braggadochio is uncas'd
in all the Ladies sights.*

AFTER long stormes and tempests overblowne
The sunne at length his joyous face doth
cleare :

So when as fortune all her spight hath showne,
Some blisfull houres at last must needes appeare ;
Else should afflicted wights oftimes despeire :
So comes it now to Florimell by tourne,
After long sorrowes suffered whyleare,
In which captiv'd she many moneths did mourne,
To tast of joy, and to wont pleasures to retourne.

Who being freed from Proteus cruell band 2
By Marinell was unto him affide,
And by him brought againe to Faerie land ;
Where he her spous'd, and made his joyous bride.
The time and place was blazed farre and wide,
And solemne feasts and giusts ordain'd therefore :
To which there did resort from every side
Of Lords and Ladies infinite great store ;
Ne any Knight was absent that brave courage bore.

To tell the glorie of the feast that day, 3
The goodly service, the devicefull sights,
The bridegromes state, the brides most rich aray,
The pride of Ladies, and the worth of knights,
The royall banquets, and the rare delights,
Were worke fit for an Herauld, not for me :
But for so much as to my lot here lights,
That with this present treatise doth agree,
True vertue to advance, shall here recounted bee.

When all men had with full satietie 4
Of meates and drinkes their appetites suffiz'd,
To deedes of armes and prooffe of chevalrie
They gan themselves addresse, full rich aguiz'd
As each one had his furnitures deviz'd.
And first of all issu'd Sir Marinell,
And with him sixe knights more, which enterpriz'd
To chalenge all in right of Florimell,
And to maintaine that she all others did excell.

The first of them was hight Sir Orimont, 5
A noble Knight, and tride in hard assayes.
The second had to name Sir Bellisont,
But second unto none in prowesse prayse :
The third was Brunell, famous in his dayes :
The fourth Ecastor, of exceeding might :
The fift Armeddan, skild in lovely layes :
The sixt was Lansack, a redoubted Knight :
All sixe well seene in armes, and prov'd in many a fight.

And them against came all that list to giust, 6
From every coast and countrie under sunne :
None was debard, but all had leave that lust.
The trompets sound ; then all together ronne.
Full many deeds of armes that day were donne,
And many knights unhorst, and many wounded,
As fortune fell ; yet little lost or wonne :
But all that day the greatest prayse redounded
To Marinell, whose name the Heralds loud resounded.

The second day, so soone as morrow light 7
Appear'd in heaven, into the field they came,
And there all day continew'd cruell fight,
With divers fortune fit for such a game,
In which all strove with perill to winne fame ;
Yet whether side was victor note be ghest :
But at the last the trompets did proclame
That Marinell that day deserved best.
So they departed were, and all men went to rest.

The third day came, that should due tryall lend 8
Of all the rest; and then this warlike crew
Together met, of all to make an end.
There Marinell great deeds of armes did shew,
And through the thickest like a Lyon flew,
Rashing off helmes, and ryving plates asonder,
That every one his daunger did eschew:
So terribly his dreadfull strokes did thonder,
That all men stood amaz'd, and at his might did wonder.

But what on earth can alwayes happie stand? 9
The greater prowesse greater perils find.
So farre he past amongst his enemies band,
That they have him enclosed so behind,
As by no meanes he can himselfe outwind:
And now perforce they have him prisoner taken;
And now they doe with captive bands him bind;
And now they lead him thence, of all forsaken,
Unlesse some succour had in time him overtaken.

It fortun'd, whylest they were thus ill beset, 10
Sir Artegall into the Tilt-yard came,
With Braggadochio, whom he lately met
Upon the way with that his snowy Dame:
Where when he understood by common fame
What evil hap to Marinell betid,
He much was mov'd at so unworthie shame,
And streight that boaster prayd, with whom he rid,
To change his shield with him, to be the better hid.

So forth he went, and soone them over hent, 11
Where they were leading Marinell away;
Whom he assayld with dreadlesse hardiment,
And forst the burden of their prize to stay.
They were an hundred knights of that array;
Of which th' one halfe upon himselfe did set,
The other stayd behind to gard the pray:
But he ere long the former fiftie bet,
And from the other fiftie soone the prisoner fet.

So backe he brought Sir Marinell againe ; 12
Whom having quickly arm'd againe anew,
They both together joyned might and maine,
To set afresh on all the other crew :
Whom with sore havocke soone they overthrew
And chaced quite out of the field, that none
Against them durst his head to perill shew.
So were they left Lords of the field alone ;
So Marinell by him was rescu'd from his fone.

Which when he had perform'd, then backe againe 13
To Braggadochio did his shield restore ;
Who all this while behind him did remaine,
Keeping there close with him in pretious store
That his false Ladie, as ye heard afore.
Then did the trumpets sound, and Judges rose,
And all these knights, which that day armour bore,
Came to the open hall to listen whose
The honour of the prize should be adjudg'd by those.

And thether also came in open sight 14
Fayre Florimell, into the common hall,
To greet his guerdon unto every knight,
And best to him to whom the best should fall.
Then for that stranger knight they loud did call,
To whom that day they should the girlond yield,
Who came not forth ; but for Sir Artegall
Came Braggadochio, and did shew his shield,
Which bore the Sunne brode blazed in a golden field.

The sight whereof did all with gladnesse fill : 15
So unto him they did addeeme the prise
Of all that Tryumph. Then the trumpets shrill
Don Braggadochios name resounded thrise :
So courage lent a cloke to cowardise.
And then to him came fayrest Florimell,
And goodly gan to greet his brave emprise,
And thousand thanks him yeeld, that had so well
Approv'd that day that she all others did excell.

To whom the boaster, that all knights did blot, 16
With proud disdaine did scornefull answere make,
That what he did that day, he did it not
For her, but for his owne deare Ladies sake,
Whom on his perill he did undertake
Both her and eke all others to excell :
And further did uncomely speaches crake.
Much did his words the gentle Ladie quell,
And turn'd aside for shame to heare what he did tell.

Then forth he brought his snowy Florimele, 17
Whom Trompart had in keeping there beside,
Covered from peoples gazement with a vele :
Whom when discovered they had throughly eide,
With great amazement they were stupefide ;
And said, that surely Florimell it was,
Or if it were not Florimell so tride,
That Florimell her selfe she then did pas.
So feeble skill of perfect things the vulgar has.

Which when as Marinell beheld likewise, 18
He was therewith exceedingly dismayd,
Ne wist he what to thinke, or to devise ;
But, like as one whom feends had made affrayd,
He long astonisht stood, ne ought he sayd,
Ne ought he did, but with fast fixed eies
He gazed still upon that snowy mayd ;
Whom ever as he did the more avize,
The more to be true Florimell he did surmize.

As when two sunnes appeare in the azure skye, 19
Mounted in Phœbus charet fierie bright,
Both darting forth faire beames to each mans eye,
And both adorn'd with lampes of flaming light ;
All that behold so strange prodigious sight,
Not knowing natures worke, nor what to weene,
Are rapt with wonder and with rare affright.
So stood Sir Marinell, when he had seene
The semblant of this false by his faire beauties Queene

All which when Artegall, who all this while 20
Stood in the preasse close covered, well advewed,
And saw that boasters pride and gracelesse guile,
He could no longer beare, but forth issewed,
And unto all himselfe there open shewed,
And to the boaster said; "Thou losell base,
That hast with borrowed plumes thy selfe endewed,
And others worth with leasings doest deface,
When they are all restor'd thou shalt rest in disgrace.

"That shield, which thou doest beare, was it indeed 21
Which this dayes honour sav'd to Marinell:
But not that arme, nor thou the man, I reed,
Which didst that service unto Florimell.
For prooffe shew forth thy sword, and let it tell
What strokes, what dreadfull stoure, it stird this day;
Or shew the wounds which unto thee befell;
Or shew the sweat with which thou diddest sway
So sharpe a battell, that so many did dismay.

"But this the sword which wrought those cruell stounds,
And this the arme the which that shield did beare,
And these the signs," (so shewed forth his wounds)
"By which that glorie gotten doth appeare.
As for this Ladie, which he sheweth here,
Is not (I wager) Florimell at all;
But some fayre Franion, fit for such a fere,
That by misfortune in his hand did fall."
For prooffe whereof he bad them Florimell forth call.

So forth the noble Ladie was ybrought, 23
Adorn'd with honor and all comely grace:
Where to her bashful shamefastnesse ywrought
A great increase in her faire blushing face,
As roses did with lillies interlace;
For of those words, the which that boaster thre w.
She inly yet conceived great disgrace:
Whom when as all the people such did vew,
They shouted loud, and signes of gladnesse all did shew.

Then did he set her by that snowy one, 24
Like the true saint beside the image set,
Of both their beauties to make paragone
And triall, whether should the honor get.
Streightway, so soone as both together met,
Th' enchanted Damzell vanisht into nought:
Her snowy substance melted as with heat,
Ne of that goodly hew remayned ought,
But th' emptie girdle which about her wast was wrought.

As when the daughter of Thaumantes faire 25
Hath in a watry cloud displayed wide
Her goodly bow, which paints the liquid ayre,
That all men wonder at her colours pride;
All suddenly, ere one can looke aside,
The glorious picture vanisheth away,
Ne any token doth thereof abide:
So did this Ladies goodly forme decay,
And into nothing goe, ere one could it bewray.

Which when as all that present were beheld, 26
They stricken were with great astonishment,
And their faint hearts with senselesse horror queld,
To see the thing, that seem'd so excellent,
So stolen from their fancies wonderment,
That what of it became none understood;
And Braggadochio selfe with dreriment
So daunted was in his despeyring mood,
That like a lifelesse corse immoveable he stood.

But Artegall that golden belt uptooke, 27
The which of all her spoyle was onely left;
Which was not hers, as many it mistooke,
But Florimells owne girdle, from her reft
While she was flying, like a weary weft,
From that foule monster which did her compell
To perils great; which he unbuckling eft
Presented to the fayrest Florimell;
Who round about her tender wast it fitted well.

Full many Ladies often had assayd 28
About their middles that faire belt to knit;
And many a one suppos'd to be a mayd:
Yet it to none of all their loynes would fit,
Till Florimell about her fastned it.
Such power it had, that to no womans wast
By any skill or labour it would sit,
Unlesse that she were continent and chast,
But it would lose or breake, that many had disgrast.

Whilest thus they busied were bout Florimell, 29
And boastfull Braggadochio to defame,
Sir Guyon, as by fortune then befell,
Forth from the thickest preasse of people came,
His owne good steed, which he had stolne, to clame:
And, th' one hand seizing on his golden bit,
With th' other drew his sword; for with the same
He meant the thiefe there deadly to have smit:
And, had he not bene held, he nought had fayld of it.

Thereof great hurly burly moved was 30
Throughout the hall for that same warlike horse;
For Braggadochio would not let him pas,
And Guyon would him algates have perforce,
Or it approve upon his carrion corse.
Which troublous stirre when Artegall perceived,
He nigh them drew to stay th' avengers forse;
And gan inquire how was that steed bereaved,
Whether by might extort, or else by slight deceived?

Who all that piteous storie, which befell 31
About that wofull couple which were slaine,
And their young bloodie babe to him gan tell;
With whom whiles he did in the wood remaine,
His horse purloyned was by subtill traine;
For which he chalenged the thiefe to fight:
But he for nought could him thereto constraine;
For as the death he hated such despight,
And rather had to lose then trie in armes his right.

Which Artegall well hearing, though no more 32
By law of armes there neede ones right to trie,
As was the wont of warlike knights of yore,
Then that his foe should him the field denie,
Yet further right by tokens to descrie,
He askt what privie tokens he did beare?
"If that" (said Guyon) "may you satisfie,
Within his mouth a blacke spot doth appeare,
Shapt like a horses shoe, who list to seeke it there."

Whereof to make due tryall, one did take 33
The horse in hand within his mouth to looke;
But with his heeles so sorely he him strake,
That all his ribs he quite in peeces broke,
That never word from that day forth he spoke.
Another, that would seeme to have more wit,
Him by the bright embrodered hedstall tooke;
But by the shoulder him so sore he bit,
That he him maymed quite, and all his shoulder split.

Ne he his mouth would open unto wight, 34
Untill that Guyon selfe unto him spake,
And called Brigadore, (so was he hight,) Whose voice
so soone as he did undertake,
Eftsoones he stood as still as any stake,
And suffred all his secret marke to see:
And, when as he him nam'd, for joy he brake
His bands, and follow'd him with gladfull glee,
And friskt, and flong aloft, and louted low on knee.

Thereby Sir Artegall did plaine areed 35
That unto him the horse belong'd, and sayd;
"Lo there! Sir Guyon, take to you the steed,
As he with golden saddle is arayd,
And let that losell, plainely now displayd,
Hence fare on foot, till he an horse have gayned."
But the proud boaster gan his doome upbrayd,
And him revil'd, and rated, and disdayned,
That judgement so unjust against him had ordayned.

Much was the knight incenst with his lewd word 36
To have revenged that his villeny ;
And thrice did lay his hand upon his sword,
To have him slaine, or dearely doen aby :
But Guyon did his choler pacify,
Saying, " Sir knight, it would dishonour bee
To you that are our judge of equity,
To wreake your wrath on such a carle as hee :
It's punishment enough that all his shame doe see."

So did he mitigate Sir Artégall ; 37
But Talus by the backe the boaster hent,
And drawing him out of the open hall
Upon him did inflict this punishment :
First he his beard did shave, and fowly shent ;
Then from him reft his shield, and it renverst,
And blotted out his armes with falshood blent ;
And himselfe baffuld, and his armes unherst ;
And broke his sword in twaine, and all his armour sperst.

The whiles his guilefull groome was fled away, 38
But vaine it was to thinke from him to flie ;
Who overtaking him did disaray,
And all his face deform'd with infamie,
And out of court him scourged openly.
So ought all faytours, that true knighthood shame,
And armes dishonour with base villanie,
From all brave knights be banisht with defame ;
For oft their lewdnes blotteth good deserts with blame.

Now when these counterfeits were thus uncased 39
Out of the foreside of their forgerie,
And in the sight of all men cleane disgraced,
All gan to jest and gibe full merilie
At the remembrance of their knaverie :
Ladies can laugh at Ladies, Knights at Knights,
To thinke with how great vaunt of braverie
He them abused through his subtill slights,
And what a glorious shew he made in all their sights.

There leave we them in pleasure and repast, 40
Spending their joyous dayes and gladfull nights,
And taking usurie of time forepast,
With all deare delices and rare delights,
Fit for such Ladies and such lovely knights;
And turne we here to this faire furrowes end
Our wearie yokes, to gather fresher sprights,
That when as time to Artegall shall tend,
We on his first adventure may him forward send.



CANTO IV.

*Artegall dealeth right betwixt
two brethren that doe strive :
Saves Terpine from the gallow tree,
and doth from death reprove.*

WHOSO upon him selfe will take the skill 1
True Justice unto people to divide,
Had neede have mightie hands for to fulfill
That which he doth with righteous doome decide,
And for to maister wrong and puissant pride :
For vaine it is to deeme of things aright,
And makes wrong doers justice to deride,
Unlesse it be perform'd with dreadlesse might ;
For powre is the right hand of Justice truely hight.

Therefore whylome to knights of great emprise 2
The charge of Justice given was in trust,
That they might execute her judgements wise,
And with their might beat downe licentious lust,
Which proudly did impugne her sentence just :
Whereof no braver president this day
Remaines on earth, preserv'd from yron rust
Of rude oblivion and long times decay,
Then this of Artégall, which here we have to say.

Who having lately left that lovely payre, 3
Enlincked fast in wedlockes loyall bond,
Bold Marinell with Florimell the fayre,
With whom great feast and goodly glee he fond,
Departed from the Castle of the strond
To follow his adventures first intent,
Which long agoe he taken had in hond :
Ne wight with him for his assistance went,
But that great yron groome, his gard and government.

With whom, as he did passe by the sea shore, . 4
He chaunst to come whereas two comely Squires,
Both brethren, whom one wombe together bore,
But stirred up with different desires,
Together strove, and kindled wrathfull fires :
And them beside two seemely damzels stood,
By all meanes seeking to asswage their ires ;
Now with faire words, but words did little good,
Now with sharpe threats, but threats the more increast
their mood.

And there before them stood a Coffer strong 5
Fast bound on every side with iron bands,
But seeming to have suffred mickle wrong,
Either by being wreckt uppon the sands,
Or being carried farre from forraine lands.
Seem'd that for it these Squires at ods did fall,
And bent against them selves their cruell hands
But evermore those Damzells did forestall
Their furious encounter, and their fiercenesse pall.

But firmly fixt they were with dint of sword 6
And battailes doubtfull prooffe their rights to try ;
Ne other end their fury would afford,
But what to them Fortune would justify :
So stood they both in readinesse, thereby
To joyne the combate with cruell intent,
When Artegall, arriving happily,
Did stay a while their greedy bickermment,
Till he had questioned the cause of their dissent.

To whom the elder did this aunswere frame : 7
" Then weet ye, Sir, that we two brethren be,
To whom our sire, Milesio by name,
Did equally bequeath his lands in fee,
Two Islands, which ye there before you see
Not farre in sea ; of which the one appeares
But like a little Mount of small degree,
Yet was as great and wide, ere many years,
As that same other Isle, that greater bredth now beares.

"But tract of time, that all things doth decay, 8
And this devouring Sea, that naught doth spare,
The most part of my land hath washt away,
And throwne it up unto my brothers share :
So his encreased, but mine did empaire.
Before which time I lov'd, as was my lot,
That further mayd, hight Philtera the faire,
With whom a goodly doure I should have got,
And should have joyned bene to her in wedlocks knot.

"Then did my younger brother, Amidas, 9
Love that same other Damzell, Lucy bright,
To whom but little dowre allotted was :
Her vertue was the dowre that did delight.
What better dowre can to a dame be hight ?
But now, when Philtra saw my lands decay
And former livelod fayle, she left me quight,
And to my brother did ellope streight way ;
Who, taking her from me, his owne love left astray.

"She, seeing then her selfe forsaken so, 10
Through dolorous despaire which she conceyved,
Into the Sea her selfe did headlong throw,
Thinking to have her grieffe by death bereaved :
But see how much her purpose was deceived !
Whilest thus, amidst the billowes beating of her,
Twixt life and death long to and fro she weaved,
She chaunst unwares to light uppon this coffer,
Which to her in that daunger hope of life did offer.

"The wretched mayd, that earst desir'd to die, 11
When as the paine of death she tasted had,
And but halfe seene his ugly visnomie,
Gan to repent that she had beene so mad
For any death to chaunge life, though most bad :
And catching hold of this sea-beaten chest,
The lucky Pylot of her passage sad,
After long tossing in the seas distrest,
Her weary barke at last uppon mine Isle did rest.

“Where I by chaunce then wandering on the shore 12
Did her espy, and through my good endeavour
From dreadfull mouth of death, which threatned sore
Her to have swallow’d up, did helpe to save her.
She then, in recompence of that great favour
Which I on her bestowed, bestowed on me
The portion of that good which Fortune gave her,
Together with her selfe in dowry free;
Both goodly portions, but of both the better she.

“Yet in this coffer which she with her brought 13
Great threasure sithence we did finde contained,
Which as our owne we tooke, and so it thought;
But this same other Damzell since hath fained
That to her selfe that threasure appertained;
And that she did transport the same by sea,
To bring it to her husband new ordained,
But suffred cruell shipwracke by the way:
But, whether it be so or no, I can not say.

“But whether it indeede be so or no, 14
This doe I say, that what so good or ill
Or God or Fortune unto me did throw,
Not wronging any other by my will,
I hold mine owne, and so will hold it still.
And though my land he first did winne away,
And then my love, (though now it little skill)
Yet my good lucke he shall not likewise pray,
But I will it defend whilst ever that I may.”

So having sayd, the younger did ensew : 15
“Full true it is what so about our land
My brother here declared hath to you:
But not for it this ods twixt us doth stand,
But for this threasure throwne uppon his strand;
Which well I prove, as shall appeare by triall,
To be this maides with whom I fastned hand,
Known by good markes and perfect good espiall:
Therefore it ought be rendred her without deniall.”

When they thus ended had, the Knight began: 16

"Certes, your strife were easie to accord,
Would ye remit it to some righteous man."

"Unto yourselfe," said they, "we give our word,
To bide that judgement ye shall us afford."

"Then for assurance to my doome to stand,
Under my foote let each lay downe his sword;
And then you shall my sentence understand."

So each of them layd downe his sword out of his hand.

Then Artegall thus to the younger sayd: 17

"Now tell me, Amidas, if that ye may,
Your brothers land the which the sea hath layd
Unto your part, and pluckt from his away,
By what good right doe you withhold this day?"

"What other right," (quoth he) "should you esteeme,
But that the sea it to my share did lay?"

"Your right is good," (sayd he) "and so I deeme,
That what the sea unto you sent your own should seeme."

Then turning to the elder thus he sayd: 18

"Now, Bracidas, let this likewise be showne;
Your brothers treasure, which from him is strayd,
Being the dowry of his wife well knowne,
By what right doe you claime to be your owne?"

"What other right," (quoth he) "should you esteeme,
But that the sea hath it unto me throwne?"

"Your right is good," (sayd he) "and so I deeme,
That what the sea unto you sent your own should seeme."

"For equall right in equall things doth stand; 19

For what the mighty Sea hath once possest,
And plucked quite from all possessors hand,
Whether by rage of waves that never rest,
Or else by wracke that wretches hath distrest,
He may dispose by his imperiall might,
As thing at randon left, to whom he list.

So, Amidas, the land was yours first hight;
And so the treasure yours is, Bracidas, by right."

When he his sentence thus pronounced had, 20
Both Amidas and Philtra were displeased ;
But Bracidas and Lucy were right glad,
And on the threasure by that judgement seased.
So was their discord by this doome appeased,
And each one had his right. Then Artegall,
When as their sharpe contention he had ceased,
Departed on his way, as did befall,
To follow his old quest, the which him forth did call.

So as he travelled upon the way, 21
He chaunst to come, where happily he spide
A rout of many people farre away :
To whom his course he hastily applide,
To weete the cause of their assemblaunce wide :
To whom when he approached neare in sight,
(An uncouth sight) he plainly then descride
To be a troupe of women, warlike dight,
With weapons in their hands as ready for to fight :

And in the midst of them he saw a Knight, 22
With both his hands behinde him pinnoed hard,
And round about his necke an halter tight,
And ready for the gallow tree prepar'd :
His face was covered, and his head was bar'd,
That who he was uneath was to descry ;
And with full heavy heart with them he far'd,
Griev'd to the soule, and groning inwardly,
That he of womens hands so base a death should dy.

But they, like tyrants mercillesse, the more 23
Rejoyced at his miserable case,
And him reviled, and reproched sore
With bitter taunts and termes of vile disgrace.
Now when as Artegall, arriv'd in place,
Did aske what cause brought that man to decay,
They round about him gan to swarme apace,
Meaning on him their cruell hands to lay,
And to have wrought unwares some villanous assay.

But he was soone aware of their ill minde, 24
And drawing backe deceived their intent :
Yet, though him selfe did shame on womankinde
His mighty hand to shend, he Talus sent
To wrecke on them their follies hardyment :
Who with few sowces of his yron flae
Dispersed all their troupe incontinent,
And sent them home to tell a piteous tale
Of their vaine prowesse turned to their proper bale.

But that same wretched man, ordaynd to die, 25
They left behind them, glad to be so quit :
Him Talus tooke out of perplexitie,
And horror of fowle death for Knight unfit,
Who more than losse of life ydreaded it ;
And him restoring unto living light,
So brought unto his Lord, where he did sit
Beholding all that womanish weake fight ;
Whom soone as he beheld he knew, and thus behight.

“ Sir Turpine! haplesse man, what make you here ?
Or have you lost your selfe and your discretion,
That ever in this wretched case ye were ?
Or have ye yeelded you to proude oppression
Of womens powre, that boast of mens subjection ?
Or else what other deadly dismall day
Is falne on you by heavens hard direction,
That ye were runne so fondly far astray
As for to lead your selfe unto your owne decay ? ”

Much was the man confounded in his mind, 27
Partly with shame, and partly with dismay,
That all astonisht he him selfe did find,
And little had for his excuse to say,
But onely thus: “ Most haplesse well ye may
Me justly terme, that to this shame am brought,
And made the scorne of Knighthod this same day :
But who can scape what his owne fate hath wrought?
The work of heavens will surpasseth humane thought.”

- “ Right true; but faulty men use oftentimes 28
To attribute their folly unto fate,
And lay on heaven the guilt of their owne crimes.
But tell, Sir Terpin, ne let you amate
Your misery, how fell ye in this state?” [shame,
“ Then sith ye needs” (quoth he) “ will know my
And all the ill which chaunst to me of late,
I shortly will to you rehearse the same,
In hope ye will not turne misfortune to my blame.
- “ Being desirous (as all Knights are woont) 29
Through hard adventures deedes of armes to try,
And after fame and honour for to hunt,
I heard report that farre abroad did fly,
That a proud Amazon did late defy
All the brave Knights that hold of Maidenhead,
And unto them wrought all the villany
That she could forge in her malicious head,
Which some hath put to shame, and many done be dead.
- “ The cause, they say, of this her cruell hate 30
Is for the sake of Bellodant the bold,
To whom she bore most fervent love of late,
And wooed him by all the waies she could:
But when she saw at last that he ne would
For ought or nought be wonne unto her will,
She turn’d her love to hatred manifold,
And for his sake vow’d to doe all the ill [fulfill.
Which she could doe to Knights; which now she doth
- “ For all those Knights, the which by force or guile
She doth subdue, she fowly doth entreate.
First, she doth them of warlike armes despoile,
And cloth in womens weedes: And then with threat
Doth them compell to worke, to earne their meat,
To spin, to card, to sew, to wash, to wring;
Ne doth she give them other thing to eat
But bread and water or like feeble thing,
Them to disable from revenge adventuring.

“ But if through stout disdaine of manly mind 32
Any her proud observaunce will withstand,
Uppon that gibbet, which is there behind,
She causeth them be hang’d up out of hand :
In which condition I right now did stand ;
For being overcome by her in fight,
And put to that base service of her band,
I rather chose to die in lives despight,
Then lead that shamefull life, unworthy of a Knight.”

“ How hight that Amazon ? ” (sayd Artegall) 33
“ And where and how far hence does she abide ? ”
“ Her name ” (quothe he) “ they Radigund doe call,
A Princesse of great powre and greater pride,
And Queene of Amazons, in armes well tride
And sundry battels, which she hath atchieved
With great successe, that her hath glorifide,
And made her famous, more then is believed ;
Ne would I it have ween’d, had I not late it prievd.”

“ Now sure,” (said he) “ and by the faith that I 34
To Maydenhead and noble knighthood owe,
I will not rest till I her might doe trie,
And venge the shame that she to Knights doth show.
Therefore, Sir Terpin, from you lightly throw
This squalid weede, the patterne of dispaire,
And wend with me, that ye may see and know
How Fortune will your ruin’d name repaire
And knights of Maidenhead, whose praise she would
empaire.”

With that, like one that hopelesse was repy’vd 35
From deathes dore at which he lately lay,
Those yron fetters wherewith he was gyv’d,
The badges of reproch, he threw away,
And nimbly did him dight to guide the way
Unto the dwelling of that Amazone :
Which was from thence not past a mile or tway ;
A goodly city and a mighty one,
The which, of her owne name, she called Radegone.

Where they arriving by the watchmen were 36
Descried streight; who all the citty warned
How that three warlike persons did appeare,
Of which the one him seem'd a Knight all armed,
And th' other two well likely to have harmed.
Eftsoones the people all to harnesse ran,
And like a sort of Bees in clusters swarmed :
Ere long their queene her selfe, halfe like a man,
Came forth into the rout, and them t' array began.

And now the Knights, being arrived neare, 37
Did beat uppon the gates to enter in ;
And at the Porter, skorning them to feare,
Threw many threats, if they the towne did win,
To teare his flesh in pieces for his sin :
Which when as Radigund there comming heard,
Her heart for rage did grate, and teeth did grin.
She bad that streight the gates should be unbard,
And to them way to make with weapons well prepard.

Soone as the gates were open to them set, 38
They pressed forward, entraunce to have made ;
But in the middle way they were ymet
With a sharpe showre of arrowes, which them staid,
And better bad advise, ere they assaid
Unknowen perill of bold womens pride.
Then all that rout uppon them rudely laid,
And heaped strokes so fast on every side,
And arrowes haild so thicke, that they could not abide.

But Radigund her selfe, when she espide 39
Sir Terpin, from her direfull doome acquit,
So cruell doale amongst her maides divide
T' avenge that shame they did on him commit,
All sodainely enflam'd with furious fit
Like a fell Lionesse at him she flew,
And on his head-peece him so fiercely smit,
That to the ground him quite she overthrew,
Dismayd so with the stroke that he no colours knew.

Soone as she saw him on the ground to grovell, 40
She lightly to him leapt; and in his necke
Her proud foote setting, at his head did levell,
Weening at once her wrath on him to wreake
And his contempt, that did her judgment breake.
As when a Beare hath seiz'd her cruell clawes
Uppon the carkasse of some beast too weake,
Proudly stands over, and a while doth pause
To heare the piteous beast pleading her plaintiffe cause.

Whom when as Artegall in that distresse 41
By chaunce beheld, he left the bloody slaughter
In which he swam, and ranne to his redresse:
There her assayling fiercely fresh, he raught her
Such an huge stroke, that it of sence distraught her;
And had she not it warded warily,
It had depriv'd her mother of a daughter:
Nathlesse for all the powre she did apply
It made her stagger oft, and stare with ghastly eye.

Like to an Eagle, in his kingly pride 42
Soring through his wide Empire of the aire
To weather his brode sailes, by chaunce hath spide
A Goshauke, which hath seized for her share
Uppon some fowle that should her feast prepare;
With dreadfull force he flies at her bylive,
That with his souce, which none endure dare,
Her from the quarrey he away doth drive,
And from her griping pounce the greedy prey doth rive.

But soone as she her sence recover'd had, 43
She fiercely towards him her selfe gan dight,
Through vengeful wrath and sdeignfull pride half
For never had she suffred such despight: [mad;
But ere she could joyne hand with him to fight,
Her warlike maides about her flockt so fast,
That they disparted them, maugre their might,
And with their troupes did far a sunder cast;
But mongst the rest the fight did untill evening last.

And every while that mighty yron man
With his strange weapon, never wont in warre,
Them sorely vext, and courst, and overran,
And broke their bowes, and did their shooting marre,
That none of all the many once did darre
Him to assault, nor once approach him nie;
But like a sort of sheepe dispersed farre
For dread of their devouringemie,
Through all the fields and vallies did before him flie.

But when as daies faire shinie-beame, yclowded 45
With fearefull shadowes of deformed night,
Warn'd man and beast in quiet rest be shrowded,
Bold Radigund with sound of trumpe on hight,
Causd all her people to surcease from fight;
And gathering them unto her citties gate,
Made them all enter in before her sight;
And all the wounded, and the weake in state,
To be conuayed in, ere she would once retrate.

When thus the field was voided all away, 46
And all things quieted, the Elfin Knight,
Weary of toile and travell of that day,
Causd his pavilion to be richly pight
Before the city gate, in open sight;
Where he him selfe did rest in safety
Together with Sir Terpin all that night:
But Talus usde, in times of jeopardy,
To keepe a nightly watch for dread of treachery.

But Radigund, full of heart-gnawing grieve 47
For the rebuke which she sustain'd that day,
Could take no rest, ne would receive reliefe;
But tossed in her troublous minde what way
She mote revenge that blot which on her lay.
There she resolv'd her selfe in single fight
To try her Fortune, and his force assay,
Rather than see her people spoiled quight,
As she had seene that day, a disauenterous sight.

She called forth to her a trusty mayd, 48
 Whom she thought fittest for that businesse ;
 Her name was Clarin, and thus to her sayd :
 "Goe, damzell, quickly, doe thy selfe addresse
 To doe the message which I shall expresse.
 Goe thou unto that stranger Faery Knight,
 Who yeester day drove us to such distresse :
 Tell, that to morrow I with him wil fight,
 And try in equall field whether hath greater might.

"But these conditions doe to him propound : 49
 That if I vanquishe him, he shall obay
 My law, and ever to my lore be bound ;
 And so will I, if me he vanquish may,
 What ever he shall like to doe or say.
 Goe streight, and take with thee to witnesse it
 Sixe of thy fellowes of the best array,
 And beare with you both wine and juncates fit,
 And bid him eate: henceforth he oft shall hungry sit."

The Damzell streight obeyd, and putting all 50
 In readinesse, forth to the Town-gate went ;
 Where sounding loud a Trumpet from the wall,
 Unto those warlike Knights she warning sent.
 Then Talus forth issuing from the tent
 Unto the wall his way did fearelesse take,
 To weeten what that trumpets sounding ment :
 Where that same Damzell lowdly him bespake,
 And shew'd that with his Lord she would empar-
 launce make.

So he them streight conducted to his Lord ; 51
 Who, as he could, them goodly well did greete,
 Till they had told their message word by word :
 Which he accepting well, as he could weete,
 Them fairely entertaynd with curt'sies meete,
 And gave them gifts and things of deare delight.
 So backe againe they homeward turn'd their feete ;
 But Artegall him selfe to rest did dight,
 That he mote fresher be against the next daies fight.

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CHISWICK PRESS:—PRINTED BY WHITTINGHAM AND WILKINS,
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE.

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